Commentary

Volume Fifty-eight, Number One, July 1974

Did the Press Uncover Watergate?

Edward Jay Epstein

Israel—With Terrorists / Joan Colebrook

Against the Neo-Malthusians / B. Bruce-Briggs

Crime and the Criminologists / James Q. Wilson

Voices of Orthodoxy / David Singer

Vonnegut & His Audience / Edward Grossman

Coppola's Progress / William S. Pechter

Peace in the Middle East? Samuel Katz / Walter Laqueur

Books in Review: Paul H. Weaver / Jane Larkin Crain
Louis Berg / David Herbert Donald / Murray Friedman
David Stern / Joseph W. Bishop, Jr.

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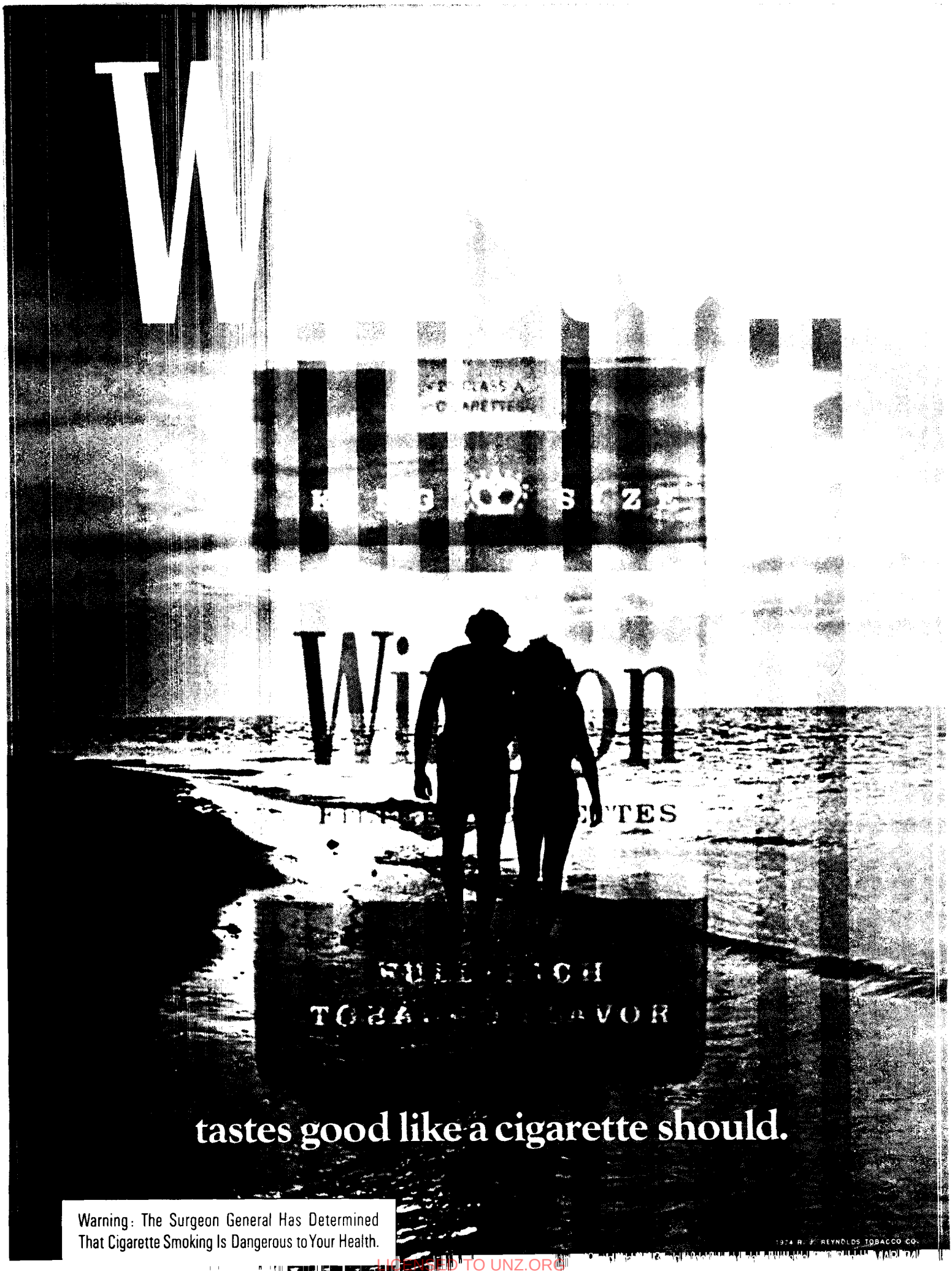
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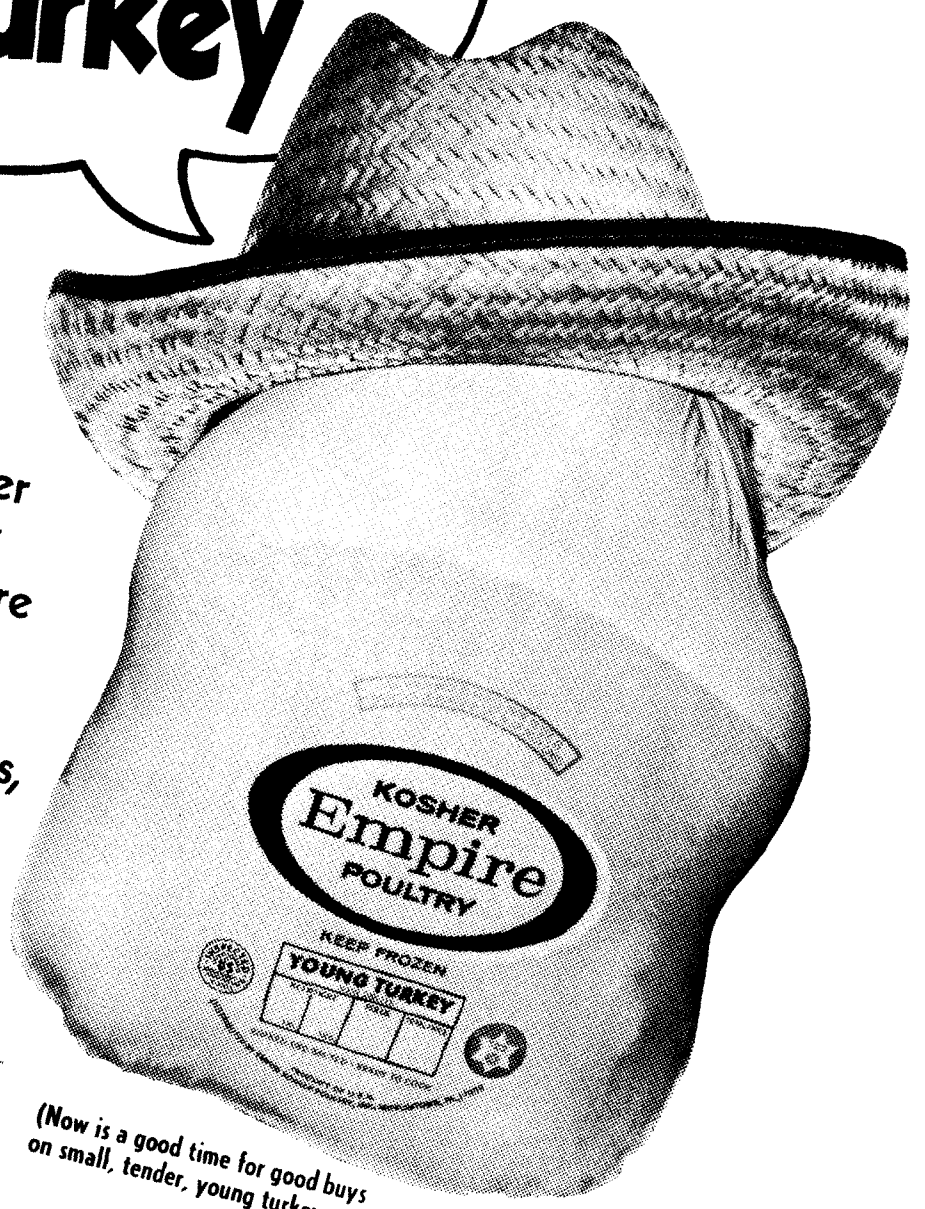

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Letters from Readers

Peace in the Middle East?

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Walter Laqueur's article, "Israel After the War: Peace with Egypt?" [March], is finely balanced. Regrettably, however, his references to the sober realities of the conflict are balanced by much wishful thinking and by an accommodation of some of the facts to an apparently preconceived but quite imaginary scenario.

Mr. Laqueur claims that Israel could and should have made a separate "deal" with Egypt after the Six-Day War. He spells out what he thinks this should have been and indeed recommends a similar deal as a feasible policy now, after the October war. He suggests that an "interim accommodation" (*sic*) could have been reached with Egypt after 1967, based on a "demilitarization of the Sinai." I cannot here analyze the facile presentation of "demilitarization" as though it were a clearly understood panacea. It should be recalled, however, that demilitarization has proved in the past to be no real obstacle to an aggressor, and that it may, moreover, be a snare and a delusion to the intended victim. Nor can I guess what Mr. Laqueur believes Egypt should have given Israel in return for "demilitarization." These are questions secondary to the crucial implication of Mr. Laqueur's charge: that the Egyptians were *prepared* to reach an accommodation and would have accepted his proposal.

Factually this is pure myth. How was it to be achieved? Mr. Laqueur himself admits that there was no "genuine peace overture" from the Arabs. (Why "genuine"? It must be said for the Arabs that they did not even pretend to make *any* peace overture.) He himself quotes the decision of the summit conference of the Arab states in Khartoum in September 1967 that there would be "no peace, no recognition, no negotiation." He gives no evidence of any deviation from that decision, yet unconcernedly goes on to say "de-escalation might have worked." How could de-escalation have "worked" if the Arabs—and, first of all, Egypt—refused to conduct any form of negotiation about de-escalation or about anything else? This is not all. "The truth is," says Mr. Laqueur, "that those opportunities which did exist were not explored." What opportunities? In all his 6,000 words Mr. Laqueur does not give even the shadow of a hint.

The implications of this issue would not at first glance be worthy of much space. But the myth of the "opportunities that were not explored or missed," in spite of its absurdity, gained wide currency before 1973 and indeed was woven into the widespread, protracted, and substantially successful campaign of myth and fantasy conducted by ill-wishers of Israel, and by self-denigrating Israeli intellectuals seeking a sympathetic audience in "liberal" circles abroad—a campaign which in the long run served to whitewash the Arab aggressors and distorted and eroded Israel's image in the world.

In sketching in the background to his main theme Mr. Laqueur provides us with a tangled analysis of Israeli attitudes which too owes more to his projected scenario (and perhaps to certain prejudices) than to the facts. He declares that after the Six-Day War a good case could be, and was, made on military grounds for not withdrawing from the cease-fire lines—"quite apart from the biblical prophecies and other divine injunctions invoked by the few Israeli annexationists." This passage raises a large question of credibility. Why does Mr. Laqueur reserve the term "annexationists" for those "few" people who, in his words, invoked "biblical prophecies and other divine injunctions"? (The reference to "other" divine injunctions is apparently intended to be facetious at the expense of religious Jews.) Are people who propose "annexation" on grounds of security less annexationist than people who adduce other reasons?

When he talks of "the few" annexationists, is he summarizing a statistical breakdown? It is a strange, and obviously subjective, description of the very large segment of the population, including personalities from all parties—Left, Right, and Center—and including eminent personalities in all walks of life—academics, writers, soldiers, jurists, educators, rabbis—who believed that the demands of Israel's self-preservation (after

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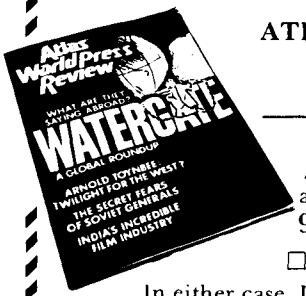

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three defensive wars) were buttressed not only by the historic, unbroken national connection of the Jewish people with Palestine (which is what Zionism is about) but also by criteria solidly grounded in the modern history of the country, in international law, and in any canon of accepted international morality and conduct.

There is a substantial post-Six-Day War literature on the subject, including studies in depth by respected international jurists which make plain not only the preemptive validity of Israel's claim to Western Palestine, but also the absence of Egyptian sovereign rights in Sinai and the logic and legality of Israel's presence in that peninsula.

No less strained and stretched is Mr. Laqueur's picture of official Israeli government attitudes. He claims that "as time went on . . . Israeli leaders became increasingly pessimistic about the prospects of a peace settlement. As long as the Arabs were unwilling to talk, Israel had to stand fast. A growing reluctance was felt even to discuss the possible terms of a settlement."

Such a reluctance *could* have been a logical consequence of Arab intransigence. In some other society this is what might have happened. In fact, in Israel, exactly the opposite happened. It is doubtful if there is any precedent for the intense discussion that went on in Israel in the six years after the Six-Day War on the future of the "territories," on prospects of peace with the Arabs, and on all their related subjects. The absence of any Arab gesture, let alone willingness to discuss, only intensified the internal clash of opinion ("playing chess with ourselves," as one politician described it). The newspapers were filled day after day with articles, and with letters from readers; radio and television never tired of confrontations; lecturers from all camps were in constant demand on the perennial subject; the campuses boiled over; high-school classes were riven with dispute; social gatherings became political study meetings; families were cleft in two. Time after time the Knesset plowed over the same ground. And above this incessant noise of public debate came an equally persistent stream of statements, declarations, and expressions of opinion (and promises) by government members. Reluctance to discuss? It was impossible to keep members of the government quiet, as the then Prime Minister, Levi Eshkol, pointed out. It would be safe to wager that the number of statements by Israeli leaders on the subject of possible terms of negotiation with the Arabs between June 1967 and October 1973 runs into many hundreds.

Nor, contrary again to Mr. Laqueur's thesis, did the government's attitude harden. It gradually *eroded*. After six months of resistance to Abba Eban's pressure, it accepted the UN Security Council Resolution 242, which provided for "withdrawal from occupied territories," thus determining in advance the basis and the thrust of any future negotiations even while the Arabs continued to refuse to negotiate. Eighteen months later, the dominant Labor party laid down a more specific outline of terms for a settlement in the so-called Unwritten Law. This provided for a major withdrawal in Sinai (while holding Sharm el-Sheikh), and for an unspecified withdrawal in Judea and Samaria. Finally, in 1973 the Labor leaders evolved a new program, the Galili 14-point document, which represented a retreat even from the Unwritten Law.

All this while the Arabs, though employing semantic variants, continued—all of them—to show no signs of budging from their refusal to negotiate and from their simple demand for an Israeli withdrawal without negotiation from all territories occupied in 1967 and the "restoration of the rights of the Palestinians." My view of the Israel government's policies is much more dim that that of Mr. Laqueur, but in the name of what scholarly analysis, of facts, of logic, of morality, or even of pragmatic politics, does he lay the absence of negotiations at the door of the Israeli government?

Having conjured up an Israeli policy of "reluctance to discuss a peace settlement," Mr. Laqueur proceeds to find flaws in it. He lists a number of the changes and developments that were taking place in the world—*all to the advantage of the Arabs*: the all-out aid of the Soviet Union as against the far less than wholehearted support of the U.S. for Israel; the "overrating" by Jerusalem of the policy of détente; and the oil weapon. His list, correct in itself, is not complete. The international scales were indeed turning drastically in favor of the

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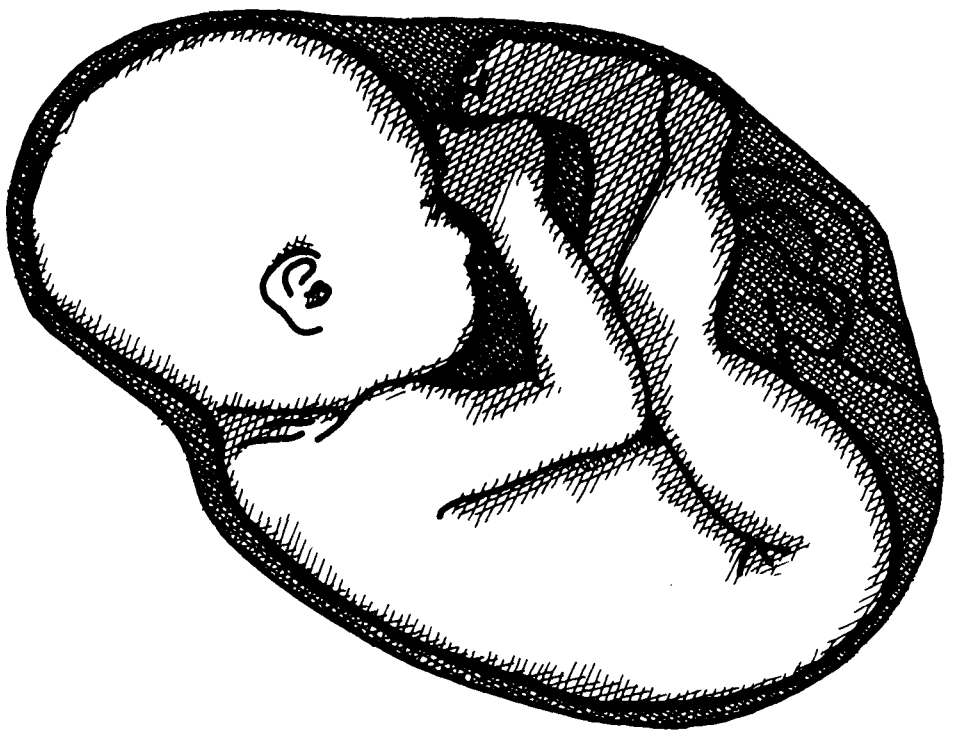

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Arabs. Yet astonishingly, Mr. Laqueur finds in this development an additional reason for insinuating that the Israeli government should have, somehow, conducted negotiations with the Arabs!

If the Arabs, in September 1967, immediately after the grave defeat they had suffered, proclaimed their utter and unchanging refusal either to negotiate with Israel or to consider giving up one iota of their ambition to erase her from the map—why, as the changes in the world pressed the scales down more and more in their favor, bringing the prospect of victory, as they saw it, ever nearer, why should they *then* become *less* intransigent, *more* willing to speak to Israel? In fact, of course they did not. And the paradoxical reality is that, in the face of the stone-wall attitude of the Arabs, the range of proposed territorial concessions by the Israeli government grew even greater. Eban, by 1972, was speaking of 98 per cent.

The construction by Mr. Laqueur of the charges that somehow the Israeli government was to blame for the absence of negotiation and even of an actual "accommodation," is presumably necessary to his thesis on the present prospect of peace with Egypt. Built into that construction is its central flaw, a flaw which indeed reflects the gravest ongoing blunder committed by the Israel government itself: the refusal to face the hard, the bitter fact that the dispute with the Arabs is not a quarrel over this or that strip of territory, but is the consequence of the unfaltering determination of the Arab nation, sprawled over the so-called "Arab world" from the Atlantic to the Persian Gulf, to eliminate the Jewish state from its "heart."

Moreover, only once before, at the moment of Israel's embattled birth as a state, did the Arabs have as rational a hope of the early achievement of their ambition as they have now.

At the beginning of his article Mr. Laqueur suggests that "any discussion of the current prospects for peace between Israel and the Arab countries has to begin by rehearsing the history of the Middle East between the Six-Day War of June 1967 and the Yom Kippur War of 1973." This proposition would be innocuous if it did not sidetrack and divert attention from the central pertinent proposition that any discussion of the prospects for peace will not be realistic until we know that the Arabs have given up their idea that the Jewish state must disappear.

An awareness of this proposition does indeed flicker fitfully in Mr. Laqueur's article, but to him, as to the Israeli government (some of whose members occasionally mention *en passant* that they know the Arabs aim at destroying Israel), the reality is presumably too harsh; so he backs away from it in order to indulge in his wishful-fantasy that a "deal," a "settlement," not only was but is possible.

I quote Mr. Laqueur: "Arab leaders had threatened Israel with extinction for many years prior to 1967 and those threats could not be dismissed as idle." This is rather an odd way to summarize the fact that the Arab leaders had not only threatened, but had spent much blood and treasure since Israel's very conception, in order to destroy the Jewish state; that in 1948, the people of newborn Israel—whose extent was less even than the area contained in the grotesque indefensible armistice lines of 1949—paid in 6,000 dead to repel the Arab onslaught—more, proportionately, than the British or the United States in the whole of World War II, ten times more proportionately than Israel's own losses in the October war; and that the Arabs maintained a comprehensive campaign of hostilities throughout the nineteen years that ended in the planned, concerted, "final" three-front offensive in 1967.

The theme of the necessity, the justice, the morality, the sanctity of destroying the Jewish state has become part of the warp and the woof not only of Arab politics, but of Arab education and of Arab literature. Mr. Laqueur shows some awareness of this. "To be sure," he writes, "one can find hundreds of articles and dozens of books published in Egypt all proclaiming the inadmissibility of a Jewish state in the Middle East." He could have added that these are part of the hundreds of books published throughout the Arab countries; that many of them revile the inhabitants of Israel as the scum of the earth, and some of them —including texts used in Egyptian schools—disseminate in concentrated form, and as factual material, all the anti-Semitic propaganda ever published, including the stories of the use of the blood of Christian children in the baking of matzoth, and the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

At no stage, in none of the changing circumstances, have the Arabs—*any* of the Arabs—given up the idea of the "inadmissibility of the Jewish state," nor in fact the public proclamation of their intention to extinguish it. The only concession they have made in response to the civilized gestures of horror at the coarse, widely-disseminated pre-1967 formula of "throwing the Jews into the sea," has been the evolution over the years of a formula which will not offend the casual ear, and which can reasonably even be used in the same breath as the word "peace." What is this formula? It is simple: Israel must withdraw from all territory occupied in the 1967 war and then the "national" (or alternatively "legitimate") "rights of the Palestinians must be restored."

The international developments, the October war and its dramatic aftermath, down to the oil embargo, have sown in the Arabs the belief that this object is now within their grasp. Far from budging from any part of this program, they now proclaim with confidence that it is already on the way, and threaten renewed war (and perhaps further use of the oil weapon) if Israel does not comply. Contrary to Mr. Laqueur's thesis, for which he does not produce a single piece of evidence, Egypt is at the fountainhead of Arab strategy and it is in the forefront of the Arab campaign.

Here is Anwar Sadat in a *Newsweek* interview (March 25, 1974) which is in fact no more than a repetition, broadly, of previous interviews: "When asked, 'What, in your judgment, is a settlement that everyone can live with?,' Sadat replied: 'It's quite clear. Evacuation of the territories occupied in 1967, along with a solution of the Palestinian problem that is based on the legitimate national rights of the Palestinians.'"

Sadat politely declined to define what the "legitimate national rights" meant, and intimated that this should be left to the "Palestinians" themselves.

It so happens that the precise Egyptian definition of the whole formula had been spelled out earlier by one of Sadat's most important publicists: Saleh Gawdat, the editor of the prestigious weekly *al-Mussawar* who, at the end of a

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comprehensive explanation of the formula, explained that final peace —*sulh*—meant that "the Jews of Palestine will return to their senses and will dwell under one roof and under one flag with the Arabs of Palestine, in a secular state devoid of any bigotry or racialism, proportional to their respective numerical ratio in 1948. . . . The Jews who came from abroad will return to their countries of origin. . . ."

This is the formula of the Palestinian organizations; and it was ceremoniously adopted by all the Arab states at the Algiers summit conference where Egypt played a leading part. It is no less real a purpose than was Hitler's Final Solution. But Mr. Laqueur suggests that we assume that Sadat does not really mean it.

In fact, the Arabs' unrelenting purpose is a harsh and a grim prospect for Israel. It becomes actively perilous in consequence of the new collaboration between Sadat and Kissinger. Enough of the Arab blueprint has gained official American support to make feasible in Arab eyes the shrinking of Israel by diplomatic means (with or without a forced smile on Israel's face) to a stage where the final phase—the "restoration of the rights of the Palestinians"—will seem a walkover, more feasible than it seemed in 1967.

Mr. Laqueur, alive to the radical changes in the world constellation in favor of the Arabs before the October war, and surely not unaware of their far greater influence and power in the world after that war, ignores the far-reaching implications of the change. He ignores the new relationship between Egypt and the United States. He ignores the fact that Kissinger cooperated with the USSR in saving Egypt from military defeat in October, and that he has obviously persuaded Sadat to believe that he will exploit the power he holds over Israel to force upon her, within a reasonable period, the concession to very nearly all the demands of the Arab states.

The veritable campaign of propaganda by Sadat in favor of Kissinger, and of the United States, conducted both among his colleagues in the other Arab states and in all his public pronouncements, his emphasis on the *fundamental change* in U.S. policy which has led the U.S. "to embark" (as he said in the *Newsweek* interview) "on a policy of working toward peace based on justice for the region"—all these can only mean that Kissinger has accepted basically the Arab definition of "peace with justice." Otherwise, we may be sure, Sadat would not be so fulsome in his praise of him nor dare to press all his pan-Arab colleagues to trust him.

Moreover there is ample corroboration by Kissinger himself—not only in his pro-Egyptian actions during the October war but in his encouraging pronouncements thereafter.

It was Kissinger who, after the major effort by the Israel government to "prove beyond any doubt" that it was the Arabs who were the aggressors on Yom Kippur, blandly justified the Arab aggression. Later, in his Peking speech in November, he asserted in so many words that if the Geneva conference *succeeded,* Israel's position would be difficult—that is, she would have to give up so much territory that it would be necessary to consider giving her guarantees, American or international. In his January statement in Washington he expressed his confidence that a peaceful settlement would be reached in the Middle East and that there were only three problems for which as yet he had no solution: the Golan Heights, Jerusalem, and the rights of the Palestinians. But, he added ominously, he hoped "with Israeli cooperation" to solve these problems too.

From Sadat's immediate point of view this means that he can expect to be in early possession of the whole of Sinai. Indeed in the interview in *Newsweek* he declared that he expected "the next phase of *complete Israeli withdrawal*" to take "probably a few months."

Sadat, confident now of the support of the American State Department in achieving all but the final stages of the shrinking of Israel, has reason to be gratified to find that even now, when both he and Kissinger have left so little to the imagination about the scope of their cooperative endeavor, independent Jewish observers, instead of crying out and warning against the dire implication for Israel (and in the long run for American interests), insist on lulling the prospective victim into a false sense of security. Mr. Laqueur tries throughout his article, as a counterpoint to his more sober references to the realities, to suggest to

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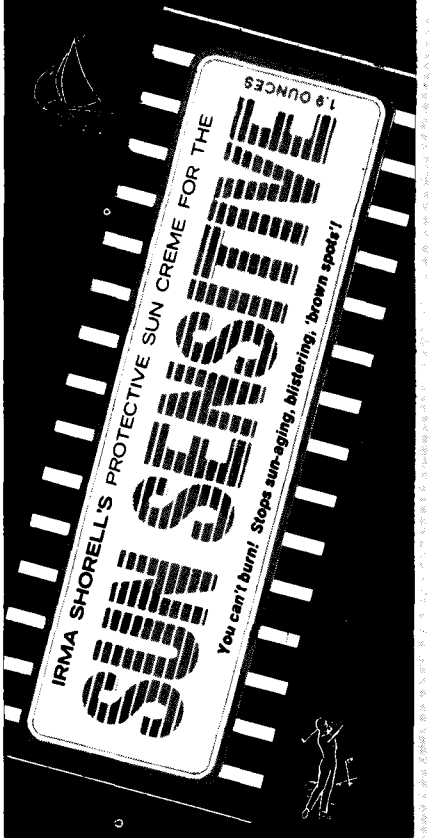

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Israel that she should ignore them and follow a policy based on the assumption that Sadat is interested only in what Walter Laqueur thinks it reasonable for him to be interested in: the restoration to Egypt of Sinai. To this end he not only conjures up the mythical "opportunities" of the past as appropriate precedents for the opportunities of the present, but discovers new, less comprehensive "basic Egyptian demands" which do not exist and of which Sadat himself is clearly unaware. Thus he writes: "If the chances of overall peace are remote there does exist now (*as after 1967*) an opportunity for defusing the conflict, for rendering unlikely the renewal of fighting on a large scale. This can be done principally by Israel's meeting the basic demands of the Egyptians—gradual withdrawal of Israeli forces from *large parts* of the Sinai and the recognition in principle of Egyptian sovereignty there, in exchange for demilitarization" (emphasis added).

Mr. Laqueur does indeed offer an explanation why he thinks it right and reasonable for Israel to disregard the whole monstrous edifice of Arab absolute negation of Israel, and the history of Egyptian aggression since 1948, compounded by the repeated unabashed proclamation of the "Palestinian formula" which Mr. Laqueur knows means the plan for extinguishing Israel. He does indeed suggest why we should take his word for it that at the very moment when the elimination of the intrusive Jewish state from the map of the "Arab world," of which Sadat has dreamed for twenty-five years, appears to be within the grasp of the Arab nation—he intends to turn his back on it and on the Arab people for whom he has already shed so much blood, and to tell the Syrian Arabs, and the Jordanian Arabs, and the Palestinian Arabs that they must now fight their "own" battles.

"Egypt has assured its allies," writes Mr. Laqueur, "that it will under no circumstances make peace with Israel unless Israel withdraws from all occupied territories and unless the national rights of the Palestinians are restored. The official interpretation of this formula, as I have noted, means the liquidation of the State of Israel. *There are, however, several other interpretations possible*" (emphasis added). But Mr. Laqueur does not specify the "other possible interpretations," nor, if they exist, of what weight they are if the intending liquidators of Israel do not appear to know about them.

But Mr. Laqueur goes on: "There are, in addition, legitimate grounds for doubting the strength of Egypt's commitment to the cause of its allies." He proceeds to explain the jealousies and differences in the Arab world and adds that "when the hour of truth comes, as it did in October 1973, little more than token support is ever forthcoming from its Arab friends." For whatever little this would be worth in practical politics, it is simply not true. Already in 1967, then in the years after 1967—in every sphere of the ongoing diplomatic and propaganda offensive, and in the support given to the terrorist organizations—and now in the October war, the looser and sometimes fragile inter-Arab collaboration of previous years gave way to an adequately effective and well-coordinated partnership. For all the characteristic inter-Arab squabbling, and sometimes harder quarrels over tactics, there is no sign of the coordination breaking down. Not least important is the complete unity of purpose and thrust with the main "Palestinian" organizations, exemplified most sharply at the Algiers summit conference.

More fundamental, however, is the distortion in the very concept conjured up by Mr. Laqueur of "Egyptian commitments to her allies." Mr. Laqueur turns his back on the "first cause," and propounds a false premise—which originates from one of the themes of pro-Arab propaganda—arising out of Israeli occupation of Sinai, as though somehow the world began with an arbitrary Israeli occupation of Sinai. He ignores the fact that fighting between Egypt and Israel started in 1948, with the declared purpose of Egypt (and the other Arab states of the time) to wipe out Israel, which did *not* occupy Sinai; continued in 1956 and again in 1967, when Sinai, far from being occupied by Israel, was used by Egypt as a base and staging-post for destroying Israel. The historic truth is that the Egyptian "commitment," first undertaken in 1948, and implemented ever since, is *not to "allies." It is a commitment to the "Arab nation" as a whole, to Egypt herself, that the "Arab territory" of "Falastin" must be redeemed.* The Arabs, moreover,

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pointed out endlessly before 1967 that it was Arab honor that required such redemption.

Inter-Arab squabbles can be serious. If Israel did in fact disappear, they would no doubt bring on a new bloodbath in the fight over the spoils, with the "Palestinians" as the foremost victims. Today and in the foreseeable future, however, these squabbles do not and will not prevent coordination against Israel. Least of all is there likely to be a breakdown when the game appears to be in their hands.

Mr. Laqueur suggests yet another reason for us to believe that after getting back even a part of Sinai, Sadat will let up. "There is a strong inclination inside Egypt," he writes, "to put Egyptian interests first, pan-Arab interests second." I do not know what this means exactly, but I challenge Mr. Laqueur to produce a single statement by an Egyptian leader to suggest that there is any Egyptian interest which contradicts and supersedes or even suspends the obligation of "solving the problem of Palestine."

If there is such an inclination in Egypt, and its relevant implications are those suggested by Mr. Laqueur—that the self-interest of Egypt requires her to abandon the struggle precisely now, in the most favorable circumstances since 1948—Sadat certainly makes no sign that he shares it. Not a single hint, not a word. On the contrary: his *Newsweek* interviewer asked him questions which contained an opening to declare his intention of preferring Egyptian interests to pan-Arab interests, and his negative reply was very emphatic. Not only did he reject the idea of an overall settlement with Egypt alone ("There will be no separate peace, Egypt, Syria, and the Palestinians will move forward in the negotiation together along parallel lines") but he specifically turned down the very idea that Mr. Laqueur's wishful thinking would dictate to him.

"Isn't it better in the next stage," asked his interviewer, "to negotiate an overall Sinai settlement, rather than a phase-by-phase arrangement . . .?"

Sadat replied: "That would be the wise way to proceed, but not Egypt alone. The other parties must also be included. Disengagement, which was negotiated separately on the Egyptian and Syrian fronts, was a purely military issue. When it comes to political issues, the three parts [i.e., Egypt, Syria, Jordan] are inseparable."

The simple truth is, of course, that at this moment Sadat is the main architect of the whole Arab policy, *he* is the chief coordinator, with Kissinger, of the "peaceful" advance toward Israeli withdrawal on all three fronts. Sadat is manipulating the timetable to insure the most convenient order of pressures. Far from abandoning his allies or the Palestine problem, he has now a blueprint for its solution; and though he is no doubt having his problems (originating, perhaps, in Moscow) about keeping the other players in line, there is no question of his and their common fundamental commitment to the cause, nor any indication of a weakening of their singlemindedness in its promotion.

Finally, Mr. Laqueur, who appropriately compares the prospect of an imposed settlement with the Munich conference of 1938, and correctly finds Munich offering an "instructive analogy" to the situation in which Israel now finds itself, suggests three differences, all intended no doubt to be comforting to Israel. The first is that "not every peace treaty in world history has been violated, nor every international guarantee ignored." This is true, but hardly relevant. So far every agreement the Arabs (including Egypt) have signed with Israel has been violated—beginning with the armistice agreement in 1949, through the moving up of the missiles to the Suez Canal in August 1970, down to the failure at this very moment of the commitment to thin out the artillery emplacements, so ceremoniously pledged by the Egyptians in the current "disengagement of forces in Sinai." Moreover, there is sufficient sanction in the Moslem religion for the breach of any agreement if and when the national interest requires it. But, in any case, of what value and what relevance are Mr. Laqueur's generalizations when we are concerned with a specific set of circumstances, a specific Arab purpose, and a specific international climate encouraging that purpose?

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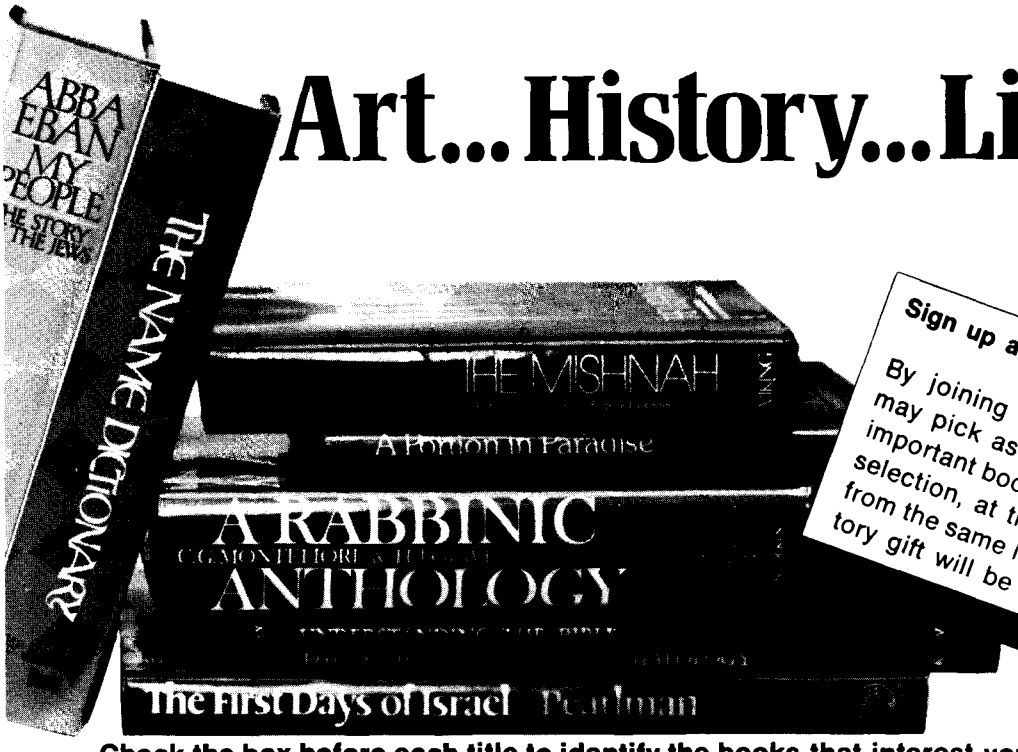

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Will Mr. Laqueur's knowledge of the statistics of treaty-keeping and treaty-breaking mean anything if the Arab states achieve their purpose and Israel, after withdrawing "as required" to approximately the lines of June 5, 1967, and armed, albeit, both with American arms and American guarantees, is faced at Kfar Saba and Ashkelon and Jerusalem with the threatened attack (or coordinated "guerrilla" action) by Arab forces all described as "Palestinians fighting for the restoration of their rights"?

Second, Mr. Laqueur comforts us with the fact that Israel faces a coalition of states that have neither the cohesion nor the power of Nazi Germany, This may be scientifically true. But are we engaged in a study of comparative cohesion? This coalition, even without such cohesion, all but destroyed Israel in 1948, forced it to take preemptive action which alone saved it in 1967, brought on a near catastrophe in October 1973, and now continues to be highly effective.

And then Mr. Laqueur assures us that Israel—unlike Czechoslovakia in 1938—will fight. It must be gratifying to him to feel that even if Israel takes his advice, and discovers that the "flexibility" he urges upon it has once more forced it into the worst possible circumstances for a desperate fight for survival—Israel will not let him down.

SAMUEL KATZ

Tel Aviv, Israel

WALTER LAQUEUR writes:

For obvious reasons I cannot answer Samuel Katz's letter in detail; I call the attention of interested readers to my new book, *Confrontation: The Middle East and World Politics*, which covers some of the issues involved. On the question of whether deescalation might have worked, I refer readers also to Yair Evron's *The Middle East* (London, 1973). All I argued in my article was that certain opportunities, discussed at length in both these books, were not exploited in the period between 1967 and 1973. I am aware of Sadat's speeches and the writing of various Egyptian journalists, but these are only one aspect of the Egyptian situation; either Mr. Katz does not know about the other aspects or he does not want to know. He wants certainties—a peace treaty, secure borders, etc.—but we are not likely to have these in the near future. I was concerned not with a peace treaty but with the prevention of a war, or a series of wars, a prospect which since 1967 I regarded (in contrast to Mr. Katz) as inevitable, given the official Israeli policy of immobilism.

Mr. Katz's concept is basically that of Vladimir Jabotinsky in *The Iron Wall,* first published some fifty years ago. It can be summarized, not unfairly I believe, in a single sentence: The Arabs hate Israel, they would like to destroy it if they could, and Israel has to be strong to survive. These insights were common knowledge among the children of Rishon Le-Zion and Tel Aviv four decades ago. The trouble with them as an assessment of today's situation is that at this point Mr. Katz (and unfortunately not only he) stops thinking, instead of trying to formulate a concept, a policy, a perspective. My ideas may be questioned on various points (not, let me mention in passing, on the issue of the demilitarization of the Sinai, which would have provided, as we now know, a more effective warning system than the Bar-Lev line), but I did make several policy suggestions to lead Israel out of its present precarious position. Mr. Katz has no alternative whatsoever to offer. His view is that all the Arabs are against Israel, they will always be, and there is nothing Israel can do but hold on to what it has. This anti-concept is basically very pessimistic, for the Arabs are many and the Israelis few, the Arabs have both money and oil, and there is no symmetry between American support for Israel and Soviet support for the Arab countries.

In the final analysis, then, there is not much to choose between Mr. Katz's assessment of the situation and that of Qaddafi of Libya, Assad of Syria, and the Palestinians. This line of thought leads nowhere except to disaster; it is not a policy but the abdication of political thinking, and I find it perhaps the most worrisome aspect of an admittedly difficult situation. In their long history Jews have shown a great many sterling qualities and some that were not so admirable, but even their severest critics never thought them stupid. At the present time it is disconcerting to find otherwise intelligent men and women quite incapable of thinking rationally in political terms.

Sylvia Plath

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Any man who presumes to enter into the psychic innards of experiences which are uniquely feminine, especially the sexual and the maternal, is bound to end up in the quicksand of (for him) the unknowable and the quagmire of a women's-lib counterattack. All the more so, if the woman in question died by her own hands, and is now undergoing a revival of recognition as a poet. I am referring, of course, to the late Sylvia Plath, and to John Romano's "Sylvia Plath Reconsidered" [April].

Mr. Romano begins by reiterating the currently fashionable (but in my opinion fallacious) dogma of the New Criticism, that a writer's *persona* is an impermissible criterion for judging his literary product. He then proceeds to contradict his own disclaimer by going beyond the decency of allowing the dead (and suicides, particularly) the privilege of privacy, which they have earned by their self-sacrifice. Now, whether suicide may truly be given the accolade of "earned" is a matter for theologians, and perhaps for psychiatrists, to judge, not for literary critics. . . . Mr. Romano's credentials do not entitle him to refute the validity and severity of the biblical curse to Eve: "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow, and thy conception; in sorrow shalt thou bear children, and thy desire shall be to thy husband, who shall rule over thee." This curse and its social and psychological consequences have been called "the biological tragedy of women." A woman may face up to it with resignation or with rebellion, which will inevitably find expression in her poetry, if she is a poet. Men, as lifemates or as critics, should tread this hallowed, yet too often profaned, ground with awe, or at least with caution. This, Mr. Romano unfeelingly fails to do. . . .

That Sylvia Plath herself committed the sin of delving into the (to her) unknowable agony of the victims of the Holocaust, need not deny her the right to be judged on her merits as a poet. The first I agree should rightly be the prerogative of the survivors; but only the second should have been Mr. Romano's concern in his essay. One may fault Sylvia Plath for narcissistic self-admiration in dis-

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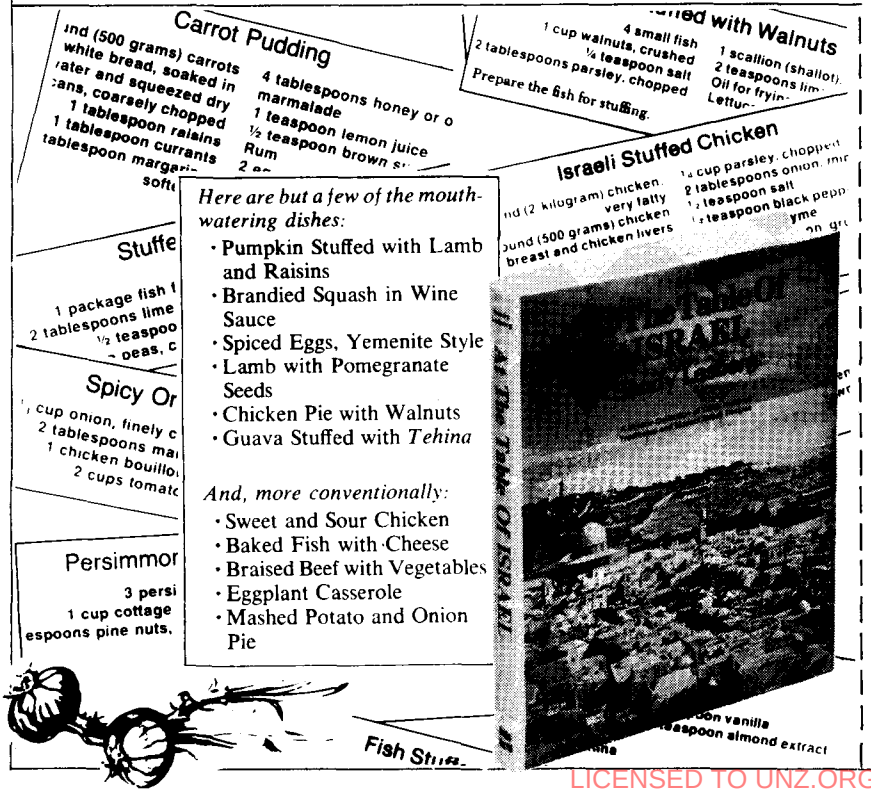

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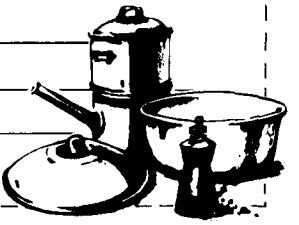

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guise, in dwelling upon her "fifteen years of straight A's," and criticize her misfortune of unwanted wifehood and motherhood on social or moral grounds. One may cast psychiatric aspersions upon her ultimate act of self-immolation. But only the objective-correlative vectors of the poetic transfiguration of these intimacies into fiction need concern the critic, not her right to them (posthumously, all the more so).

Mr. Romano, I feel, has expended too much gratuitous talk on the first at the expense of his responsibility to deal adequately with the second. Sylvia Plath still deserves serious reconsideration as a poet, without disturbing the rest of her soul after her death, and the ghosts which tormented her during her tragically abbreviated lifetime.

DAVID KUSELEWITZ
Spertus College of Judaica
Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

John Romano ought to reconsider his reconsideration of Sylvia Plath. It is, in fact, not a reconsideration, but the same old vindictiveness we have been getting since her suicide. Wherein does he differ from Irving Howe who said much the same thing about her concentration-camp images well over two years ago in *Harper's* (January 1972)? Plath's poem "Daddy," according to Howe, "aggrandizes on the 'enormity of ready emotion' invoked by references to the concentration camps, in behalf of an ill-controlled if occasionally brilliant outburst. There is something monstrous when tangled emotions about one's father are deliberately compared with the historical fate of the European Jews."

Mr. Romano's questioning of the legitimacy of using Dachau and Auschwitz to portray Plath's suffering is much the same as Mr. Howe's. Why? Is the fate of the Jews in camps a fate that can never be duplicated? Cannot one individual's psyche approximate the suffering of a people? Or must one keep one's hands off such images because they are the chosen images of a chosen people?

Referring to the events of *The Bell Jar*—suicide, rape, electroshock therapy—Mr. Romano says: "They stack up like atrocities on the evening news." Precisely. The events of the book mirror the insanity and murder of the external world, horrible though they may seem in the book, in the form of the experiences of one individual.

Mr. Romano wonders what women can learn from "a text of such self-hatred," as in Plath's poems, but I would ask Mr. Romano to address himself to the reasons for such hatred not only in Sylvia Plath, but in the recent (and past) literature of women. Surely, the Gothic mode reflects this self-disgust, yet it has also produced many great works. Shall we write this tradition off because of the fastidiousness of male critics?

And finally, why are the same old issues of Plath's suicide and martyrdom being rehashed? Few critics have looked at her work . . . as deftly and surely using *personae* to express her life and her suffering. Rimbaud did this. So did Baudelaire. Why not attack them for being failures aesthetically and morally . . . because they could not "apprehend the self in others"?

CAROLE STONE
Montclair State College
Upper Montclair, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

John Romano does not so much reconsider Sylvia Plath as join such critics as Joyce Carol Oates and Irving Howe in disparaging her. This is a very easy thing to do. Despite the fashion for despair and the apocalyptic in literature, most critics—indeed most cultivated persons—must affirm "an allegiance to life." Sylvia Plath's allegiance to death and her persistent fascination with the darkest aspects of life, often expressed with extraordinary power and exquisite nuance, show that she was unbalanced, in the sense that, like Poe and Beddoes, she habitually slighted large areas of life in which most people, and the best writers, find sustenance.

However, I believe she does illuminate the arresting experiences and feelings she chose to write about. The incapacity adequately to apprehend the selves of other people is perhaps a defect in her writings. But feelings of isolation and desolation are usually so much a part of desperate, especially suicidal, emotions that I can accept her self-absorption (and her failure artistically to objectify it as a theme) as being the price one must pay to witness her terrifying but compelling vision of life in such superbly rendered poems as "Totem."

Her poetic treatment of her father, both in the use of Nazi imagery and in the hazy portraiture of him as a once-living presence, strikes me as being valid. That kind of highly authoritarian parent can appear in the dawning consciousness of a child as a being much like God: the source not only of love and unquestioned standards of value but also of fearful disapproval. The child eventually learns that the parent is not only imperfect but capable of cruelty. This experience, if not quite universal, has parallels in modern religious and political experience. I do find Sylvia Plath's painfully emotional association of her Prussian father, a professor, with the history of modern Germany . . . to be "relevant." And the poems "Daddy" and "Little Fugue" are relevant to a central fact of life: the circumstances of our helpless childhood, like the circumstances of our citizenship, are often overwhelming factors in our development and treatment as persons.

ROGER N. HOFMANN
New York City

JOHN ROMANO writes:

David Kuselewitz finds me "unfeeling" because I refuse to join in the applause for Sylvia Plath's "self-sacrifice"—his dubious word for her suicide. I can only reiterate the position taken in my article, that it is the applause which is unfeeling. There should be no need to say that I find Sylvia Plath's life and death extraordinarily moving, but in any case it is neither her suffering nor her suicide, but her writing, that is under judgment. In view of Mr. Kuselewitz's opinion that "feminine experience" is "unknowable" for men, it is not surprising that he fails to see the point of my criticism. From another point of view, it is in the very difficulty of communication and empathy between the sexes that a poet of sexual anguish, like Plath, can find her calling. Furthermore, it should be pointed out to Mr. Kuselewitz and also to Carole Stone, who take my article as a women's-lib counterattack, that the new feminists are by no means unanimous in finding Plath a satisfactory spokeswoman. Many accuse her, justifiably to my mind, of cultivating a Victorian self-image (woman as

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man-fearing martyr) and, simply, of whining.

Miss Stone's scorn of my remarks on the concentration-camp imagery is less comprehensible. I certainly did not say that such images were off-limits, "the chosen[!] images of a chosen people." But surely their use may be evaluated critically: Are the allusions supported internally by structures of meaning within the poems? Or—as in "Lady Lazarus"—are they gratuitous poetry at little cost to the imagination? I agree entirely with Roger N. Hofmann that the poems are powerful, their vision "terrifying and compelling," and this is partly because of the generous use the poet made of the Nazi metaphor. But, as the article undertakes to say, it is not as a tool of insight and apprehension that Plath employs the metaphor, but rather as a way of impressing upon us *how much* she suffered. When Mr. Hofmann says that her poems "illuminate" her experience, he has surely chosen the wrong word. Their achievement is to convey a certain intensity of pain, as to the source of which we are left mainly in the dark.

Apologetics

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his response to Edward W. Said's comment on his article, "Do the Arabs Want Peace?" [February], Gil Carl AlRoy notes [Letters from Readers, May] the symptoms of "a serious phenomenon, long known to Orientalists as 'apologetics' ": an Arab (e.g., Mr. Said) will perfidiously and hypocritically curse the unvarnished truth of an Orientalist (e.g., Mr. AlRoy) when it appears in the West; yet when it appears in the East, that same Arab condones it. Hence the sad plight of Orientalists, concludes Mr. AlRoy, or at least of the plain-speaking ones like himself, that they must dwell in "a certain climate of intimidation." Mr. AlRoy's phenomenon is, I think, more widespread than he would have us believe, and its seriousness is not, as he supposes, confined to the fallacious comments of Arabs known and confessed.

It is, of course, serious that when an Orientalist is accused of racial bias, he can only reply that his colleagues share his views; that when he reads that full peace depends upon the recognition of Palestinian rights, he supposes that this can only come with the disappearance of Jewish statehood. Still, since the Near East question will never be settled in the pages of COMMENTARY or by Orientalists, one may view these antics, if not with levity, at least with bemused or exhausted intolerance. Mr. AlRoy's "phenomenon" is quite another matter.

For this phenomenon is also known to Occidentalists like myself as "question dodging" and a "red herring," or even, in its more extreme form, as "paranoia." Must we really believe that "a certain climate of intimidation" surrounds the Orientalist writing in COMMENTARY if a single Arab dares to question his opinions? Is there any other magazine where Mr. Said's "Arabian" origins might be proposed as a necessary and sufficient explanation of his stand on Palestine? Do Orientalists live in Orientalia, a tiny enclave surrounded by firmly united Arabs? If such is the case, Mr. AlRoy's "climate"—or, as one might say, "condition"—is a "serious phenomenon" indeed.

HUGH AMORY

Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

GIL CARL ALROY writes:

Hugh Amory's complaint is based on his presumed understanding of "apologetics," a subject about which he knows nothing at all, as his letter demonstrates. If he really would like to learn about Arab apologetics, he can find an excellent introduction in Wilfred Cantwell Smith's classic, *Islam in Modern History*. And as as for the charge that I indulge in "question dodging," permit me to report that the condition described in my February article has not changed in the interim. The tone in the Arab press remains the same, with no recognition whatsoever given to the legitimacy of Israel and no abatement in the demands that the state be eliminated altogether. This attitude is epitomized by a cartoon in the April 7 issue of *al-Ahram* showing figures lining up in front of a guillotine, labeled Moshe Dayan, the Government of Israel, the Israeli Political System, and, finally, Zionism.

As for policy pronouncements, to cite only Egypt, Youth Minister Kamal Abu al-Magd declared in Beirut (April 17) that Egypt proceeds against Israel by stages. The first stage is a return to the borders of May 1967; the next the reclosing of the Straits of Tiran, opened in 1956; then finally the liquidation of the remaining political entity, created in 1948.

Incidentally, I do not, as Mr. Amory claims, feel that there is a necessary connection between recognition of the rights of the Palestinians and the disappearence of the Jewish state. Quite the contrary; I can easily envisage scenarios in which the rights of the Palestinians would be accommodated without putting an end to Israel. It is those who presume to speak for the Palestinians, including those who argue for participation in the Geneva talks, who define the "rights" of the Palestinians as ultimately incompatible with Jewish statehood. Typical is the response of Nayef Hawatmeh, leader of the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (the group responsible for the attack on Maalot), to the question of whether his organization's goal would still be the liquidation of Israel even after a Palestinian state had been formed on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. He replied: "Yes. We shall not relent on this goal because our purpose is the establishment of a democratic state in all of Palestine. A state in the occupied territories is not an obstacle, it is a starting point" (*Deutsche Zeitung*, April 30).

This brings me to the perennial question of the credibility of Arab statements. My own study inclines me to respect Arab feelings and the Arab sense of outrage at Jewish statehood. Like all people, when Arabs hurt they cry out and their hurt in this respect is very deep. It is ironic that those who are their apologists tend to imply that Arabs, alone among God's creatures, are unable to speak for themselves. This is the familiar patronizing attitude of the missionary, and it is no accident that in this country the roots of the Arab lobby are in the 150-year-old Protestant missionary endeavor in the Middle East.

But of course Mr. Amory is familiar with all of this—which is no doubt why, instead of discussing the issue rationally, he chooses to throw about epithets and indictments. With greater reticence, I will keep to myself my opinion of his motives in doing so.

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Drama Critics

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I like Jack Richardson's work as a playwright. I did not like his lethargic, inconclusive article about drama critics ["Reviewing Plays," April]. It is lacking in a single new idea or in an understanding of the people who review plays.

Mr. Richardson writes that critics' lives "might be better spent elsewhere." That may be. His life might be better spent elsewhere than in writing about critics, perhaps in writing enthusiastically about *something he cares about*. As he says, he would prefer to write about the theater instead of the theater's reviewers.

I suppose we drama critics get the critics *we* deserve.

LEONARD PROBST

NBC News
New York City

"The Exorcist"

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

COMMENTARY is the last publication I would have expected to publish a review of *The Exorcist* [" 'The Exorcist' & Its Audience," by William S. Pechter, March] which takes the film seriously, and on its own terms. I am more inclined to agree with Pauline Kael in the *New Yorker* that the film is, at worst, a brutal, witless, insulting exploitation of the most superannuated tenets of Catholicism, and, at best, a calculatedly lucrative venture in popcorn-porn.

Simply because the manifestations of "evil" in *The Exorcist* are presented in supposedly adult terms . . . and the film reinforces these effects with "a not inappropriate humorlessness," to use Mr. Pechter's phrase, are we to be convinced that Satan is alive and well and hanging around our best neighborhoods?

Granted the child's possession is disgusting to behold, but in fact how intrinsically evil is it? In a world that has witnessed Hitler's Holocaust, are we now supposed to turn gray at the sight of urine on the carpet and vomit on the cassock? . . .

On the whole, this movie Devil is a rather gauche fellow, although his brand of mischief is mechanically spectacular and as physically nasty as any reader of sado-comics could hope for. But what we are presented with in *The Exorcist* is not the ultimate evil; it is, in fact, a most convenient way of ignoring the ultimate evil.

ROSALIND LEVITT

Beverly Hills, California

WILLIAM S. PECHTER writes:

Given that I conclude by describing *The Exorcist* as artistically no more than a horror film with a new gimmick, Rosalind Levitt's ability to find my piece on it an instance of my taking the film's image of evil seriously on its own terms seems to me, to say the very least, creative. I do find the film worthy of serious interest; its phenomenal success makes it that; for, whatever else one may say about it, the film has clearly struck a responsive chord in its audience, and isn't *just another* horror film with *just another* new gimmick. (There are, as I said, plenty of other horror films which, while they may lack *The Exorcist*'s spectacular effects, are no less sensationally horrific, and they've attained nothing of *The Exorcist*'s popular success.) Moreover, heaping *The Exorcist* with ridicule or moral indignation—and it's an easy mark for both—will not make it go away. But far from my taking it on its own terms, I certainly hoped to indicate I thought much of the film's interest derived precisely from the discrepancy between its makers' intentions and its actual effect. For all its Hollywood-style lofty ambitions of portraying the ultimate evil (indeed, the Holocaust is explicitly invoked in the epigraphs to the novel) and of ending on a note of pious uplift with the triumph of goodness, the actual evil it suggests seems both distinctly more mundane and more tenacious: that of a world of dirty secrets in respected places (of White-House horrors, one might even say) in the face of whose uncontainable malaise we have the sense of being only helpless victims.

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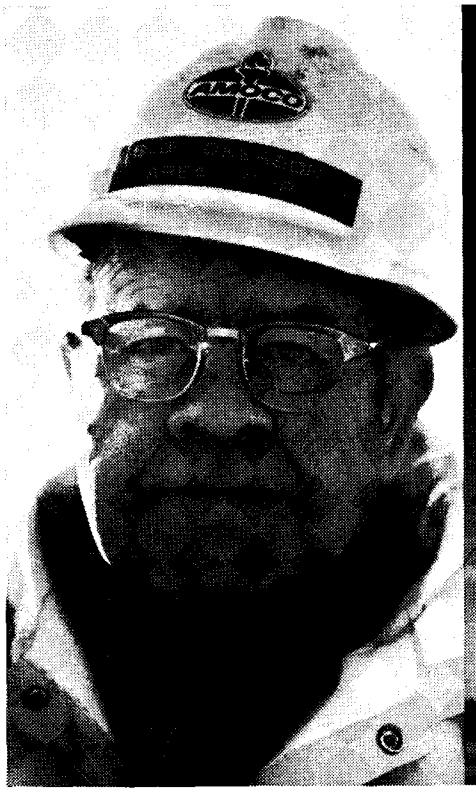

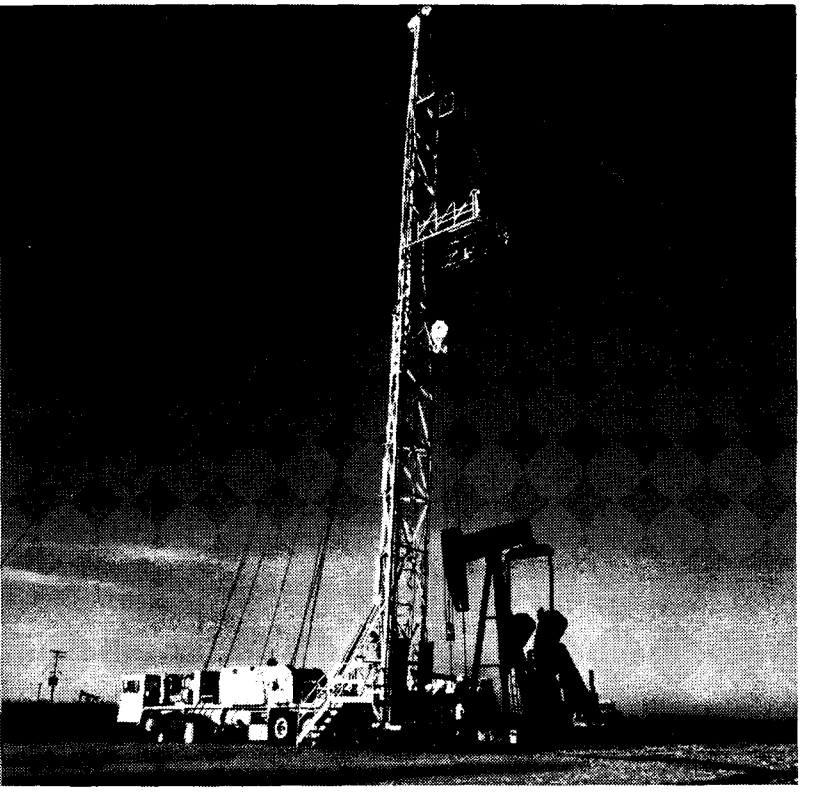

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—John Okerson, Amoco Production.

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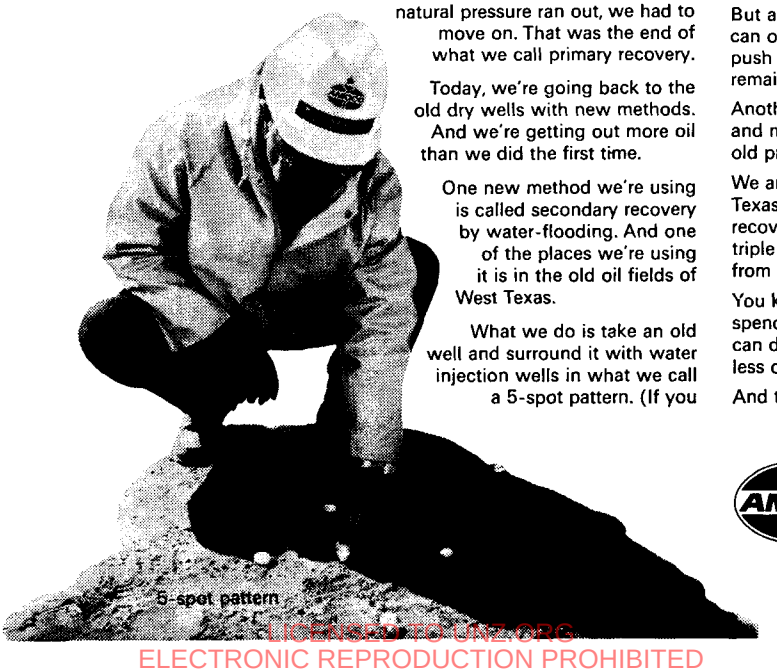

5-spot pattern

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Did the Press Uncover Watergate?

Edward Jay Epstein

A SUSTAINING myth of journalism holds that every great government scandal is revealed through the work of enterprising reporters who by one means or another pierce the official veil of secrecy. The role that government institutions themselves play in exposing official misconduct and corruption therefore tends to be seriously neglected, if not wholly ignored, in the press. This view of journalistic revelation is propagated by the press even in cases where journalists have had palpably little to do with the discovery of corruption. Pulitzer Prizes were thus awarded this year to the *Wall Street Journal* for "revealing" the scandal which forced Vice President Agnew to resign and to the Washington *Star/-News* for "revealing" the campaign contribution that led to the indictments of former cabinet officers Maurice Stans and John N. Mitchell (who were subsequently acquitted), although reporters at neither newspaper in actual fact had anything to do with uncovering the scandals. In the former case, the U.S. Attorney in Maryland had through dogged plea-bargaining and grants of immunity induced witnesses to implicate the Vice President; and in the latter case, the Securities and Exchange Commission and a grand jury had conducted the investigation that unearthed the illegal contribution which led to the indictment of the cabinet officers. In both instances, even without "leaks" to the newspapers, the scandals uncovered by government institutions would have come to the public's attention when the cases came to trial. Yet to perpetuate the myth that the members of the press were the prime movers in such great events as the conviction of a Vice President and the indictment of two former cabinet officers, the Pulitzer Prize committee simply chose the news stories nearest to these events and awarded them its honors.

The natural tendency of journalists to magnify the role of the press in great scandals is perhaps best illustrated by Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward's autobiographical account of how they "revealed" the Watergate scandals.* The dust jacket and national advertisements, very much in the bravado spirit of the book itself, declare: "All America knows about Watergate. Here, for the first time, is the story of how we know. . . . In what must be the most devastating political detective story of the century, the two young Washington *Post* reporters whose brilliant investigative journalism smashed the Watergate scandal wide open tell the whole behind-the-scenes drama the way it happened." In keeping with the mythic view of journalism, however, the book never describes the "behind-the-scenes" investigations which actually "smashed the Watergate scandal wide open"—namely the investigations conducted by the FBI, the federal prosecutors, the grand jury, and the Congressional committees. The work of almost all those institutions, which unearthed and developed all the actual evidence and disclosures of Watergate, is systematically ignored or minimized by Bernstein and Woodward. Instead, they simply focus on those parts of the prosecutors' case, the grand-jury investigation, and the FBI reports that were leaked to them.

The result is that no one interested in "how we know" about Watergate will find out from their book, or any of the other widely circulated mythopoeics about Watergate. Yet the non-journalistic version of how Watergate was uncovered is not exactly a secret—the government prosecutors (Earl Silbert, Seymour Glanzer, and Donald E. Campbell) are more than willing to give a documented account of the investigation to anyone who desires it. According to one of the prosecutors, however, "No one really wants to know." Thus the government's investigation of itself has become a missing link in the story of the Watergate scandal, and the actual role that journalists played remains ill understood.

AFTER five burglars, including James McCord, who was an employee of the Committee for the Re-election of the President (CRP), were arrested in the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee in the Watergate complex on June 17, 1972, the FBI immediately located three important chains of evidence. First, within a week of the break-in, hundred-dollar bills found on the

EDWARD JAY EPSTEIN, whose article, "Journalism and Truth," appeared in these pages in April, is the author of, among other works, *News from Nowhere* and *Inquest*. A collection of Mr. Epstein's articles on the American press will be published later this year by Random House.

* *All the President's Men*, Simon & Schuster, 349 pp., $8.95.

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burglars were easily traced by their serial numbers through the Federal Reserve Bank at Atlanta to the Miami bank account of Bernard Barker, one of the burglars arrested in the Watergate. By June 22, the prosecutors had subpoenaed Barker's bank transactions, and had established that the hundred-dollar bills found in the burglary had originally come from contributions to the Committee for the Re-election of the President and specifically from checks deposited by Kenneth Dahlberg, a CRP regional finance chairman, and others. (Copies of these checks were leaked to Woodward and Bernstein by an investigator for the Florida state's attorney one month later, well after the grand jury was presented with this information—and they "revealed" it in the Washington *Post* on August 1.) And in early June, the treasurer of the Republican National Committee, Hugh W. Sloan, Jr., confirmed to the prosecutors that campaign contributions were given to G. Gordon Liddy, who by then was suspected of being the ringleader of the conspiracy.

Secondly, the FBI, in searching the premises of the burglars, found, within twenty-four hours after their arrest, receipts, address-books, and checks that linked E. Howard Hunt, White House consultant, to the conspiracy. (This information was leaked a few days later by the Washington police to Eugene Bachinski, a Washington *Post* reporter, and subsequently published in that newspaper.) The investigation into Hunt led the prosecutors to his secretary, Kathleen Chenow, who was flown back from England, and, in early July, confirmed that Hunt and Liddy were working on clandestine projects together, and had had telephone calls from Bernard Barker just before Barker was arrested in Watergate. (Months later, in September, defense attorneys who had been given the list of prosecution witnesses leaked Miss Chenow's name to Woodward and Bernstein, who then—after calling her—"revealed" this information to the public.) Thus, in early July, the prosecutors had presented evidence to the grand jury tying Hunt and Liddy to the burglars (as well as Liddy to the money).

The most important chain of evidence involved an eyewitness to the entire conspiracy. The day of the burglary, the FBI discovered a listening post at the Howard Johnson Motor Hotel, across the street from the Watergate, from which conspirators sent radio signals to the burglars inside Watergate (and received transmissions from electronic eavesdropping devices). By checking through the records of phone calls made from this listening post, the FBI easily located Alfred Baldwin, a former FBI agent, who had kept logs of wiretaps for the conspirators and acted as a look-out. By June 25, after the prosecutors offered Baldwin's attorney a deal by which Baldwin could escape prison, Baldwin agreed to cooperate with the government.

The main instrument for extracting information from reluctant witnesses like Baldwin was the prosecutors' skill in threatening, badgering, and negotiating. By July 5, less than three weeks after the burglars were apprehended, Baldwin sketched out the outlines of the conspiracy. He identified Hunt and Liddy as being at the scene and directing the burglary; he described prior break-in attempts, the installation of eavesdropping devices, the monitoring of logs of the eavesdropping, and the delivery of the fruits of the conspiracy to CRP. All this evidence was of course presented to the grand jury in mid-July. (Liddy's name was only mentioned in passing in the press on July 22, when he resigned from CRP, and it was not until the following October that Jack Nelson of the Los Angeles *Times* located and published an interview with Baldwin. To "top" the L.A. *Times*'s interview, Woodward and Bernstein erroneously reported that Baldwin had delivered the logs to three executives at CRP, Robert C. Odle, Jr., Glenn J. Sedam, Jr., and William E. Timmons. In fact, Baldwin delivered the logs to Liddy. In any case, the press was three months behind the prosecutors in disclosing Baldwin's vital account.) The prosecutors needed, however, a witness to corroborate Baldwin, since they realized that any single witness could be discredited by fierce cross-examination. The locating of Thomas J. Gregory, a student working as a minor spy for CRP, was critical for the prosecutors' case since he was able to corroborate important elements in Baldwin's account. (Gregory's existence was never mentioned by the press until the trial.)

The prosecutors and the grand jury thus developed an airtight case against Liddy, Hunt, and the five burglars well in advance of, and without any assistance from, Woodward, Bernstein, or any other reporters. The case was presented to the grand jury and would certainly have been made public in the trial. At best, reporters, including Woodward and Bernstein, only leaked elements of the prosecutors' case to the public in advance of the trial.

BY LEAKING fragments of the prosecutors' case, Woodward and Bernstein, as well as other journalists, did of course add fuel to the fire. But even here, they were not the only ones publicizing the case. Immediately after the arrest of the Watergate burglars and throughout the campaign, Senator George McGovern denounced Watergate in most of his speeches and suggested in no uncertain terms that the White House was behind the burglary. Indeed, his campaign staff hired Walter Sheridan, a former FBI agent on Robert Kennedy's staff, to help "get out" the story. On June 20, three days after the burglary, the Democratic National Committee commenced a civil suit against the Committee for the Re-election of the President that compelled the responsible officials in CRP to give statements

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under oath (Edward Bennett Williams represented both the Democratic National Committee and the Washington *Post*). The General Accounting Office, an arm of Congress, and Common Cause, a quasi-public foundation, meanwhile forced Republican officials to disclose information about campaign contributions which indirectly added to the publicity about Watergate. Preliminary legal actions taken by the prosecutors (as well as the Florida state's attorney) also divulged important elements of the case. For example, in motions opposing bail for the defendants, the prosecutors disclosed in a brief filed June 23, 1972 that Mexican checks were deposited in Barker's account (although the press, until a month later, when the checks were literally handed to reporters, failed to pursue the "money tree" exposed in the bail motions). In short, even in publicizing Watergate, the press was only one among a number of institutions at work.

But what about Hunt and Liddy's superiors—Jeb Stuart Magruder and John Mitchell? The prosecutors were unable to develop a case against them, since as part of a cover-up, coordinated by the White House counsel John Dean, Magruder swore that he had given Liddy the contributions for a different purpose—to set up a system of informants—and this perjury was corroborated by Mitchell, by Herbert L. Porter, Magruder's assistant, and by Sally Harmony, one of Liddy's secretaries. But neither did Woodward and Bernstein nor any other reporters reveal the existence of the cover-up. The offers of executive clemency, the participation of Dean in the cover-up, the hush money, and the perjury did not emerge in the press in any serious form until after the trial of the Watergate burglars.

In the end, it was not because of the reporting of Woodward and Bernstein, but because of the pressures put on the conspirators by Judge John Sirica, the grand jury, and Congressional committees that the cover-up was unraveled. After the Watergate conspirators were convicted, Judge Sirica made it abundantly clear that they could expect long prison sentences unless they cooperated with the investigation of the Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities (the Ervin committee). One of the convicted burglars, James McCord, clearly not content with accepting such a prison sentence, wrote Sirica that perjury had been committed at the trial and the defendants had been induced by "higher-ups" to remain silent. Subsequently, McCord suggested that Magruder, Mitchell, and Dean all were involved in the planning of the burglary and cover-up.

While McCord's assertion turned out to be only hearsay evidence, obtained from Liddy, the grand jury was reconvened, the prosecutors subpoenaed Dean, and the Ervin committee began focusing on the roles of Dean and Magruder. To intensify the pressure on Dean, the prosecutors held long secret sessions with Liddy, and though Liddy steadfastly refused to discuss the case in these well-publicized sessions, the prosecutors intentionally promoted the story that Liddy was talking and implicating Dean and Magruder.

As President Nixon's transcripts confirm, the ruse succeeded: Dean believed that Liddy, who had attended meetings with him and Mitchell which eventually led to Watergate, was plea-bargaining with the prosecutors. Moreover, Dean believed that Magruder, who could also implicate him in both the planning of the burglary and the cover-up, was about to bargain with the prosecutors. And FBI Director L. Patrick Gray, in confirmation hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee, was publicly suggesting that Dean had interfered in the investigation and lied to the FBI.

Dean realized that he could not testify before the Ervin committee or the grand jury without fatally perjuring himself. Since President Nixon was not able to offer him any safe way out of his predicament, and he feared that the President's assistants would eventually sacrifice him, Dean began negotiating with the prosecutors on March 31 for immunity, and bit by bit, they forced him to disclose the entire cover-up—including the payments of hush money, blackmail threats, offers of executive clemency, the suborning of perjury, etc. In April the prosecutors finally elicited evidence from Dean of the burglary of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office and the other "horror stories." Four days after he heard Dean was bargaining with the prosecutors, Magruder also decided to plea-bargain, and corroborated Dean's story.

A final coherent picture of the planning and execution of Watergate, of the cover-up, and of the other "horror stories" was developed by the Ervin committee on television. The American public thus found out about Watergate in hundreds of hours of testimony elicited in plea-bargaining and negotiations for immunity by the prosecutors and then presented and tested in cross-examination by members of the Ervin committee.

What was the role of the press in all this? At best, during the unraveling of the cover-up, the press was able to leak the scheduled testimony a few days in advance of its appearance on television.

If Bernstein and Woodward did not in fact expose the Watergate conspiracy or the cover-up, what did they expose? The answer is that in late September they were diverted to the trail of Donald H. Segretti, a young lawyer who had been playing "dirty tricks" on various Democrats in the primaries. The quest for Segretti dominates both the largest section of their book (almost one-third) and most of their "exclusive" reports in the *Post* until the cover-up collapsed

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later that March. Unidentified sources within the government gave Bernstein and Woodward FBI "302" reports (which contain "raw"—i.e., unevaluated—interviews), phone-call records, and credit-card records, all of which elaborated Segretti's trail. Through the FBI reports and phone records, they located a number of persons whom Segretti had tried to recruit for his "dirty-tricks" campaign. The reporters assumed that this was all an integral part of Watergate, and wrote that "the Watergate bugging incident stemmed from a massive campaign of political spying and sabotage. . . . The activities, according to information in FBI and Department of Justice files, were aimed at all the major Democratic Presidential contenders." They further postulated that there were fifty other Segretti-type agents, all receiving information from Watergate-type bugging operations.

As it turned out, this was a detour, if not a false trail. Segretti (who served a brief prison sentence for such "dirty tricks" as sending two hundred copies of a defamatory letter to Democrats) has not in fact been connected to the Watergate conspiracy at all. Almost all his work took place in the primaries *before* any of the Watergate break-ins in June 1972; he was hired by Dwight Chapin in the White House and paid by Herbert Kalmbach, a lawyer for President Nixon, whereas the Watergate group was working for the Committee for the Re-election of the President and received its funds from the finance committee. No evidence has been offered by anyone, including Woodward and Bernstein, that Segretti received any information from the Watergate group, and the putative fifty other Donald Segrettis have never been found, let alone linked to Watergate. In short, neither the prosecutors, the grand jury, nor the Watergate Committee has found any evidence to support the Bernstein-Woodward thesis that Watergate was part of the Segretti operation.

The behavior of the officials who steered Bernstein and Woodward onto this circuitous course makes in itself a revealing case study. Bernstein and Woodward identify their main source only under the titillating code-name of "Deep Throat," and indicate that "Deep Throat" confirmed their suspicion that Segretti—and political spying—were at the root of the Watergate conspiracy. But who was "Deep Throat" and what was his motivation for disclosing information to Woodward and Bernstein? The prosecutors at the Department of Justice now believe that the mysterious source was probably Mark W. Felt, Jr., who was then a deputy associate director of the FBI, because one statement the reporters attribute to "Deep Throat" could only have been made by Felt. (I personally suspect that in the best traditions of the New Journalism, "Deep Throat" is a composite character.) Whether or not the prosecutors are correct, it is clear that the arduous and time-consuming investigation by Woodward and Bernstein of Segretti was heavily based on FBI "302" reports, which must ultimately have been made available by someone in the FBI. The prosecutors suggest that there was a veritable revolt against the directorship of L. Patrick Gray, because he was "too liberal." Specifically, he was allowing agents to wear colored shirts, grow their hair long, and was even recruiting women. More important, he had publicly reprimanded an FBI executive. According to this theory, certain FBI executives released the "302" files, not to expose the Watergate conspiracy or drive President Nixon from office, but simply to demonstrate to the President that Gray could not control the FBI, and therefore would prove a severe embarrassment to his administration. In other words, the intention was to get rid of Gray.

Such a theory would be perfectly consistent with the information-disclosing activities of the source that led Bernstein and Woodward astray. Ironically, even on the wrong trail, the stalwart Bernstein and Woodward generated enough damaging publicity about "Watergate" to cause the White House to vilify them and the Washington *Post*, and thus elevate them to the status of journalistic martyr-heroes. If instead of chastising the press, President Nixon and his staff had correctly identified the "signals" from the FBI, and had replaced Gray with an FBI executive, things might have turned out differently. (But Gray, as it happened, had acquired damaging files from Hunt's safe, and could engage in his own information-releasing game, if threatened.)

PERHAPS the most perplexing mystery in Bernstein and Woodward's book is why they fail to understand the role of the institutions and investigators who were supplying them and other reporters with leaks. This blind spot, endemic to journalists, proceeds from an unwillingness to see the complexity of bureaucratic in-fighting and of politics within the government itself. If the government is considered monolithic, journalists can report its activities, in simply comprehended and coherent terms, as an adversary out of touch with popular sentiments. On the other hand, if governmental activity is viewed as the product of diverse and competing agencies, all with different bases of power and interests, journalism becomes a much more difficult affair.

In any event, the fact remains that it was not the press which exposed Watergate; it was agencies of government itself. So long as journalists maintain their usual professional blind spot toward the inner conflicts and workings of the institutions of government, they will no doubt continue to speak of Watergate in terms of the David and Goliath myth, with Bernstein and Woodward as David and the government as Goliath.

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Against the Neo-Malthusians

B. Bruce-Briggs

THE past few years have seen a spate of claims that the modern era of population and economic growth is about to be halted by scarcity of resources and environmental pollution. The most influential and well-publicized of such claims have been those based on world computer models contrived by Jay Forrester, Dennis Meadows, and their colleagues for the Club of Rome.* The Forrester-Meadows studies project that continued population and economic growth will lead to mass starvation, resource exhaustion, and/or the raising of air and water pollution to lethal levels. In the foreseeable future, probably in the next fifty years, billions will die and the world will stabilize with a residue population living at subsistence levels. The more growth, the sharper the crash, and the more miserable the remainder of history.

Since Meadows's *Limits to Growth* was published, the computer models used by Forrester and Meadows have been run forward, backward, and sideways, and each variant has revealed a new error. Recently a team of scholars at the University of Sussex demolished the world model in excruciating detail. In his reply to them, Meadows took up a few minor points, disregarded hundreds more, and then asked why some people foolishly insisted on believing that further growth is possible. Here Meadows got to the heart of the issue. For while the limits-to-growth argument has been savaged in the technical press, it has gone from success to success in the elite universities and most highbrow publications† and is now being pushed hard in the mass media and the schools. *Limits to Growth* itself has sold well over a million copies in twenty languages. It is given to Dutch schoolchildren. Reportedly it is circulated to Soviet party leaders by the KGB. Its theses have been endorsed by world and national leaders in politics, science, and the arts. Growth must stop—so we are told by Lester Brown of the Overseas Development Council, Réne Duclos of the Rockefeller University, John Knowles of the Rockefeller Foundation, Dennis Gabor of the Imperial College, E. J. Mishan of the London School of Economics, Robert L. Heilbroner of the New School, and hundreds of popularizers, including Anthony Lewis of the New York *Times*.

To be sure, opposition to economic growth and material progress is not a new development; it goes back at least to the origins of the idea of progress itself. Perhaps the most renowned critic of growth was the Reverend Thomas Malthus, whose *Essay on Population* (1798) first circulated the thesis that population growth would inevitably outstrip food supply and the masses would always be doomed to minimal subsistence. Since Malthus has been wrong for 150 years, the common labeling of the limits-to-growth school as "neo-Malthusian" may seem a smear; yet Forrester, Meadows, Heilbroner, and others have willingly admitted Malthus as their forebear, and we may therefore honor them with his name.

Like any diversified group of thinkers, the neo-Malthusians differ considerably among themselves, particularly on the question of which sort of catastrophe will hit us first and how soon. But I think the following a reasonable statement of the tenets of the school:

- Exponential population and production growth are rapidly exhausting the earth's food, energy, and mineral reserves. Key resources will be expended in the next century. The current energy crisis and sub-Sahara famine are precursors of worldwide chronic and worsening shortages.
- Because the cream has already been skimmed from natural resources, and the best land is already under cultivation, expansion of mining and agriculture must resort to lower-quality mineral deposits and less fertile land.
- Improved technology and massive capital investment may extend growth for a few decades, but will vastly increase pollution and other dam-

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* The Club of Rome sounds like utopian science fiction. It is limited to 100 members who share the conviction that "the problems now facing mankind are of such complexity and interrelationship that traditional policies and institutions are no longer able to cope with them." A majority of the club are Europeans, with substantial North American, and token Japanese and Third World, contingents. Almost all the members are industrialists and establishment intellectuals.

† An exception is Rudolf Klein's "Growth and Its Enemies" in COMMENTARY, June 1972.

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age to the ecosystem, thus making the eventual cataclysm even worse.

- It follows that the industrialization of the Third World would be disastrous and further growth of the overstuffed developed world is simply criminal. The rich nations should halt, slow, or control growth and deal with international gaps by sharing their current wealth with the poor. If they do not, worldwide class war over diminishing resources is likely.
- Business-as-usual will no longer work. Worldwide decision-making and tough governmental controls are necessary.

SUCH is the current conventional wisdom with regard to the prospects for mankind. But there is also another position which draws a quite different picture of the future:

- The earth can easily support populations and gross world products many times larger than today's. Population growth is in any case slowing down, and current energy problems are the result not of scarcity but of bad government and bad business policy.
- We have almost certainly only scratched the surface of resources, which will be available in plenty for everybody for centuries.
- Pollution has been shown to be relatively easy and cheap to control once the will to do so is evident.
- It is criminal to expect the Third World to remain impoverished, foolish to expect the rich to share significantly with the poor, and silly to believe the poor will become strong enough to grasp from the prosperous by force. But given continued economic growth, the next century will see the worldwide abolition of historical poverty —a goal toward which all men should aspire.

This latter position, common in the 19th and early 20th centuries, is seldom heard articulated today in any respectable forum—which is all the more remarkable since the case for it is plausible, while technically the neo-Malthusian position is very weak and many of its proponents slur over or ignore obviously relevant evidence.

POPULATION growth is slowing down. In the U.S. for the first time in our history, the birth rate has dropped below replacement level. Other industrial nations show a similar pattern. Scattered returns from around the world strongly suggest precipitous drops in birth rates, particularly in those countries with rapid economic growth. In 1973, the UN published population projections for the remainder of the century based upon data available in 1968. In almost every case, actual census counts in 1970-72 were lower than the UN "low" projection, not to mention the "medium" projection commonly cited by proponents of the "population explosion." In no country was this drop caused by starvation or malnutrition.

On the classic Malthusian issue of food, agricultural economists have made the simple and believable calculation that the world has enough cultivable land to feed thirty billion people at present U.S. levels of consumption with existing agricultural technology. Modern transportation and distribution systems make local famines less likely. The terrible tragedy that is now afflicting the peoples along the southern edge of the Sahara is due to backwardness, not to excessive growth. All these lands are pre-industrial; many are pre-agricultural.

As for mineral resources, a characteristic neo-Malthusian calculation goes like this: there are X known reserves of mineral M which we are using up at such a rate that they will be exhausted by year Y; even if we assume that reserves are twice as big as currently estimated, mineral M will be depleted by year Z. What the reader is rarely told is that most mineral reserves have been climbing as fast as consumption; extrapolating this trend will give us more reserves in the future than in the past. The neo-Malthusians also disregard substitutions—when copper becomes scarce we can shift to aluminum, when bauxite becomes scarce we may shift to other ores.

The exploitation of the energy crisis by neo-Malthusians is a story in itself. Difficulties in getting gasoline make the impending-scarcity thesis credible to the average citizen, but the current "energy crisis" is an economic and political problem, not one of scarcity. It is not scarcity that has blocked the construction of oil refineries, delayed the Alaska pipeline, slowed the construction of nuclear reactors, crippled the coal industry for the past generation, or cut off oil imports to the United States. Consider natural gas: until very recently its price was held by the federal government at a very low level. During the same period demand for natural gas shot up because of its favorable low-pollution characteristics: the best fuel was the cheapest fuel. The domestic demand could not be satisfied. Plans were made to import liquefied natural gas (LNG) from such dubious suppliers as Algeria and Russia at four times the regulated U.S. price. Everyone knew the price had to go up. Everyone knew the regulated price was discouraging domestic exploration. Although it has been vigorously denied, everyone knew that wells discovered accidently were being capped in anticipation of the inevitable price rise. The obvious response would have been to deregulate or at least to raise the price of gas. But to do that would have meant rewarding hoarders and delivering windfall profits to the oil and gas interests. What politician outside a producing state was willing to undertake the risk?

The fundamental and lasting cause of the energy crisis is that oil is *too* plentiful and cheap in the Middle East. Persian Gulf crude can be landed at U.S. ports at a cost of two dollars a barrel (*price* is another matter—half the retail price

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of gasoline goes to Arab and U.S. governments). Domestic oil costs twice that amount and alternative sources of hydrocarbons cost three to five times more. No one has a credible scheme for any other source within competitive range. In the foreseeable future, the Arabs will be able to undercut any unprotected competitor. Arab undercutting is almost certain if the oil cartel collapses, and it is much more likely to crumble than to hold together. Therefore, any development of domestic sources, particularly if they require massive capital outlay, will require a long-term guarantee of protection from Arab competition. But it will be vigorously argued that protection of domestic sources by tariffs, quotas, or subsidies will penalize consumers and benefit the energy producers, particularly the oil companies, who are anyway (it is said) using the energy squeeze to freeze out independent distributors and gas stations, quietly lobbying behind the scenes to eliminate the oil-depletion allowance in order to strangle competition from wildcat drillers, not to mention making fat profits.

We have enough known oil in the United States to last us the remainder of the century. Only a third of the oil has been taken from existing drilled wells; another third can be extracted by secondary operations. That is, the U.S. can duplicate its total historical production of oil without drilling another foot of well. And added to this is Alaskan oil, conventional estimates of which do not include all the naval reserves on the North Slope.

We need not even try to conjecture about oil potential in off-shore drilling, shale, tar sands, and coal gasification, or the vast amounts of oil that will be discovered by the packs of American, European, Japanese, and Arab oil prospectors now probing the globe. Our grandchildren may worry about the implications of geothermal, solar, breeder fission, and fusion power; *our* immediate concern should be the implications of the crash in energy prices when the new sources all come in at once around 1980.

But what of pollution? The neo-Malthusians would have us believe that all we can do about worsening pollution is throttle back the activities which lead to pollution. For example, the neo-Malthusians say that to cut down auto emissions we must drive less: the gasoline shortage, it is claimed, improved the air in our cities. Yet the gasoline shortage resulted in a cut in driving of at most 20 per cent, while present emission controls on new cars cut emissions by over 80 per cent. The Muskie standards due to take effect around 1977 will reduce emissions to 3 per cent of what they were a decade before. Honda is putting a car into production that pollutes less than 2 per cent of the uncontrolled average. These gains have been made with modest and inexpensive modifications of existing technology. The air and water quality of New York is much better than it was a decade ago. The evidence is spotty, but it all points in the same direction: once a serious effort is undertaken (usually, under strong pressure from hostile critics), it is easy to stop polluting. And it also appears that polluted bodies of air and water return rapidly to their natural state after the source of pollution is eliminated. Those howling about permanent damage to the environment harbor Faustian conceits of man's power over nature; the damage we can do to the earth is almost certainly finite.

The biggest environmental problems at the moment are conceptual and semantic. So much hysteria has been generated over the past few years that it is difficult to determine which sorts of pollution exist naturally and which sorts of pollutants are toxic or harmful. Most of the standards of air and water quality promulgated by government bureaus were devised as political reactions to environmentalist pressures; most research since has been concocted to justify them. Still, in most cases arbitrary standards are better than none at all, and the environmentalist movement has resulted in a net gain to the nation and the world. Industrializing nations will pollute much more than we do, and will clean up as they prosper.

Management of the earth's resources is perhaps the easiest issue to deal with of all, since most problems can be handled by primitive price mechanisms. If, when, and as resources become scarce, the price will begin to rise; consumers will use less or convert to substitutes, or producers will bring in new sources which were previously unnecessary or unprofitable. This elementary bit of economics seems to be unknown to many educated people (including some economists).

Using the above line of reasoning the Hudson Institute has made calculations for operating a world of 15-20 billion people with an average per capita income of $20,000 (the current figures are just under 4 billion and $1,200; per capita income in the U.S. is $6,000). The Hudson analysts used no computer or fancy assumptions. With nothing more sophisticated than a pocket calculator, they added up land, food, and resource availability and found them sufficient for a world producing and consuming a hundred times more than today's. The only assumption was great wealth, which Hudson derived by continuing and gradually slowing down existing economic growth rates. Such a world could afford to pay for low-quality resources, massive pollution control, and plenty more, while leaving more than enough over to provide the average world citizen with a personal consumption income equivalent to that of an upper-middle-class American today. What is striking about the Hudson "world" is that it would function with present known and proven technology; no innovations would be necessary

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to make it work—no solar, geothermal, or fusion power, no artificial food, no cheap space travel.

Of course, no one is under an obligation to believe the Hudson calculations. They are plausible, yet they are mere speculation. The same, however, is true of the neo-Malthusian projections. The earth has a volume of sixty-five billion cubic miles; within mining depth of the surface are fifty million cubic miles of material. Although geologists have many theories, no one really has the dimmest notion of what all that material is. Estimates of reserves are the crudest guesses, usually accompanied by qualifications like, "under existing economic and operating conditions"—in other words, today's prices, wages, technology, and marketing patterns. (These estimates, moreover, are usually made by geologists in the employ of materials-exploiting companies and countries with a vested interest in scarcity.) We are equally ignorant on the subject of pollution. No one knows how much the atmosphere or the ocean can absorb or how the different pollutants will interact or what can be done about adverse effects, or even how adverse certain effects are. (Thus, for example, despite all our polluting activity, and despite all our fears about hazards to health, life expectancy continues to creep upward.*)

NEVERTHELESS, in the face of all this ignorance, some people confidently insist that we are entering an age of scarcity and that we must halt growth and change our values to kill the notion of material progress. To a Southern sharecropper or a Brazilian peasant, the benefits of growth and prosperity are self-evident. But to a fascinating coalition of enlightened people they are not. The growth issue cuts across traditional ideological boundaries, linking leftists with pre-capitalist reactionaries and ever-growing numbers of conventional liberals. Since the last-named dominate the formation of public opinion in the West, the neo-Malthusian thesis has become the conventional wisdom.

The recently released Energy Policy Study of the Ford Foundation† draws together many of the strands of the standard argument. The thrust of the preliminary report is that we cannot continue historical growth rates of energy use without serious consequences and we should therefore slow energy growth, preferably to zero:

> The concept of zero growth, first for population, later for resource use and now for energy in particular, has caught the attention of many citizens [here, Meadows is cited]. This stems in part from a growing concern that we are rapidly approaching the limits to growth on our planet. Besides the concern over physical limits, there is growing dissatisfaction with the automatic acceptance of "progress," as well as a feeling of "dehumanization" that stems from disillusionment with ever-growing consumption of material goods, and with the huge bureaucracies which produce, dispense, regulate, and otherwise service those goods.

The Energy Policy Study sees us as flying much less, giving up most of our cars, and no longer moving to the suburbs. The "dehumanization" of bureaucracies will supposedly be reduced by government regulation of everything we produce and consume: thus, ". . . people would be spending less time traveling, especially in commuting. To save the time wasted in commuting, they would live closer to schools and shopping areas. This kind of decision can be encouraged by governmental action." The Energy Policy Study Group anticipates that soon we will no longer believe "more is better" but rather that "enough is best."

"Enough is best." But for whom? To the already prosperous, with positions of prestige to protect, the limits-to-growth argument is as appealing as the prospect of mass prosperity is disquieting. The prosperous—be they individuals or companies or nations—are like members of a country club. Up to some point they have benefited from the growth of the club as a whole. A critical mass is necessary in the first place in order to raise capital to buy the golf links, and later on expanded membership permits more diverse and luxurious facilities. But eventually a limit will be arrived at. The courses, courts, pool, and clubhouse become more crowded. Because it is a desirable club each additional member increases its total social utility but slightly reduces its utility to each individual member. The board of governors begins to see a certain wisdom in restricting future expansion; thoughtful and serious people, they also find some high-minded and socially beneficial justification for this move.

The suburban community offers another analogy. It is lush, green, open, and uncrowded—therefore highly desirable. Families want to move in. Developers provide houses for them to move into. Yet each in-migrant, each development, makes the community that much less uncrowded, open, green, and lush. Let us suppose the population increases tenfold. Even if we could design a quality-of-life indicator showing that as a result the community is only half as good to each individual family, the total benefit to society would be greater by fivefold. Yet old-timers would bemoan the community's decline and they would be right to do so, for they are the victims of growth: others have gained, they have paid.

In fact, one can make a case that it is the prosperous in the advanced nations who have been

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* Since, however, the potential effects of irreversible changes in the atmosphere or oceans would be so catastrophic, Herman Kahn among others has recommended the establishment of a permanent monitoring system.

† Ford Foundation Energy Policy Project, *Exploring Energy Choices: A Preliminary Report* (1974).

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paying for growth throughout this entire century. I do not speak of the very rich (who can always afford to pay), but of the upper-middle class—the professionals, middle proprietors, executives, and others earning two to five times the median family income. (Any family earning more than double the median family income—currently $12,000—is in the top 10 per cent of U.S. families.) Relatively and absolutely this group has been in decline since before World War I. If one's grandfather was in the upper-middle class at that time, he enjoyed high status in the community and deference of a modest sort, even from the police. College was easy to get into for him and tuition was low. Long-distance travel, although slower, was much more luxurious and uncrowded than today, and local transport was superior: the roads were unclogged and the commuter lines efficient. Grandfather could maintain an elite residence very close to his place of work. Concerts, golf clubs, museums, ball games were easy of access and cheap. Measured in terms of life expectancy, upper-middle-class medical care was just about as good as today; measured in terms of convenience and luxury, it was better. Grandfather and grandmother had tailors and dressmakers. By the 1920's most modern conveniences for the home were already available, not to mention the greatest convenience of all—household servants.

Two generations ago, the upper-middle classes had every reason to believe in progress. Its evidence was all around them. They clearly lived better than their own grandparents, who may have had servants and status but also had poor medical care, rotten sanitation, and terrible transport. Fifty years ago the quality of life improved along with gains in the standard of living: growth paid.

Further growth has not paid—at least not for this particular group. Mass prosperity has eroded the quality of life of the upper-middle classes. When Yellowstone Park was established a century ago for the benefit of all, only a few could spare the time and money to visit it. Now that every second factory worker has a camper, one must wait in line to view Old Faithful. Once upon a time firearms were too expensive to be bought casually, now the discriminating duckhunter must share his blind with Archie Bunker. The hikers and horsemen of the Sierra Club are blown off the trails by weekenders on motorcycles.

Impending prosperity throughout the whole world is an even more frightening prospect. Already the *nouveaux bourgeois* of Europe and Japan have made themselves felt in this country, as tourists or investors. Recent high prices for beef in part reflect their prosperity and growing demand. The Japanese are bidding up the prices of rarities like art works, antiques, and classic automobiles. The plush tourist spots of the world, previously reserved for Americans, are now taken by Germans and Japanese. Worse, the industrializing economies bid against us for raw materials and fuel. Small wonder, then, that at the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Environment the industrial nations warned the less developed about the evils of growth, and smaller wonder still that Third World countries viewed the warning as another neo-colonialist plot to keep them in their place.

THE intent of the neo-Malthusians is didactic; they hope to shock us into changing our evil ways. The neo-Malthusians tell us we should share the world's resources. Does anyone really believe we will? The neo-Malthusians say we must establish a stable world order. Does anyone really believe we can? Already the more imaginative Pentagon planners are writing scenarios of resource and pollution wars. The neo-Malthusians would have us be more generous and unselfish and less greedy and materialistic. No decent man would disagree, but are Forrester, Meadows, and Mishan more persuasive than Confucius, Buddha, Isaiah, or Jesus Christ? Have computers greater authority than Scripture?

Perhaps when all the world is rich by American standards—when the economic problem will have at last been solved—mankind can devote itself to higher things. But even with the most optimistic cut in the birth rate, there will be over five billion souls on this earth at the end of the century. These people must be fed, housed, and provided with a decent life. For them, a world of zero growth would be a world of conflict, an age of iron and blood. Only continued growth can begin to deliver, in modest degree, what the coming world will require by way of health, welfare, and human dignity.

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Israel—With Terrorists

Joan Colebrook

December 1973

INSIDE the Athens airport, the baggage of a small group of passengers is being subjected to a minute search by security agents (an opening of screw-top jars, a running of hands along linings, a confiscating of knives, scissors, cans of lighter fluid). Although these passengers joke and compare notes, they suffer from a mild hilarity caused by nervousness; in fact they obviously share the El Al anxiety which seems so out of place in an airport redolent of Greek laissez-faire. (None of this is surprising, since these are Israel-bound passengers, and this is the time of terrorism.)

"Have you received anything from anyone during the voyage?" a small neat woman in a blue uniform is asking. "Are you sure you are not carrying anything which does not belong to you?" And a moment later with a hint of sharpness: "Why have you no return ticket?"

Several young Americans, slated for work on kibbutzim in Israel, arrive a little late, bent under bulky blue and orange packs. They are frank about their motives. "It is half idealism," a fresh-faced boy with curly hair confides, "a moral imperative. But let's face it—where else could you go to live for so little and so pleasantly?" There is a fanatical looking red-bearded Australian wearing a large button of the Child Swami; his dreamy eyes focus for a moment as he claims that he is interested in peace not destruction. But he adds that he is confident that there will be a major war soon. "What will be, will be," he declares in a fatalistic tone.

When at last the entire company has been screened and "accepted," there is a welcome lessening of tension. Once aboard the plane, and as it heads out over the dark waters of the Aegean, loudspeakers play gay Israeli music. But the relaxation means little in reality. According to reports provided by American overflights, the Soviet fleet lies somewhere south of Parpathos, anchored in a manner reminiscent of the early 60's when the Russians had no ports in the Mediterranean and were accustomed to put down in available shallow areas. Now Russia generally uses the ports of Latakia, Alexandria, and Port Said—not to mention being at home in Egypt, Syria, Iraq, the Yemen, and North Africa. In fact, since the time of Khrushchev, Russia has emphasized her ocean-going fleet, nuclear submarines, and regular patrols to distant oceans. To be reminded of all this, and that once such encroachment suggested a threat to the American presence, is to be reminded of the changes which have taken place in the balance of power during the last decades.

TWENTY-FOUR hours later the peaceful scene viewed from a Tel Aviv window—a scene which includes strolling citizens and tourists, the tawny balustrade bordering the beach, and the blue haze of the Mediterranean—scarcely expresses the complex pattern of the struggle for power now focused on the Middle East. Not only does the scene give an inaccurate impression, since a simmering hostility exists on all the borders, but the limitations of the scene itself, like one of those tiny areas captured in the eye of a telescope, cannot suggest the greater boundaries of the world beyond it—in this case the whole of the Middle East—let alone an international-political space much vaster than that across which Mr. Kissinger shuttles with a combination of anxiety and aplomb. This wider international-political space extends to the border between China and Russia, supposedly in a constant state of readiness for war; it stretches south to Australia, where the witticism since the Labor government came to power has been that ALL THE WAY WITH LBJ now reads LET'S KOWTOW TO CHAIRMAN MAO; it takes in terrorist activities in every part of the globe; includes a Western Europe which at once creates a common market and seems to destroy a common defense policy; and is the screen for an oil battle which is the more complex in that when an American firm like Occidental Oil and Aluminum considers building a huge refinery in Russia it is hard, first, to know whether such a refinery might give the Soviets added leverage against the United States, and, second, whether Occidental Oil and Aluminum would consider this possibility a deterrent.

If the complexities narrow down to the local

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scene, then, it is not because the wider scene is unimportant, but rather because, at any given moment, ordinary comprehension finds it difficult to cope with so heavy an international payload.

A YOUNG soldier leans against the cement steps leading to the beach. He has red hair and that particular kind of freckled face common to some Israelis. He says that he has a week's leave from the Golan. How difficult had the war been? "It was a very hard war, very tough. . . ."

We drink coffee at one of the little bars off the esplanade, and he talks of being a radio man in the tanks corps and of having three tanks destroyed under him. "I turn and there is my driver. He is dead. I knew him from kindergarten." A rather wild look comes into his eyes and he gazes over his shoulder at two men who might be listening. "You cannot talk about the war." Gloomily he adds, "There is no chance, only to fight. . . . I feel very bad about my friend . . . it was my friend from school." The same wild, agonized expression.

As we walk back from the beach there is a slogan scrawled on the cement wall—VIVA CHILE. "We have Communists here too," the young soldier says seriously. "You see it is a free country, don't you?" A moment later he adds with satisfaction, "The army doesn't take Communists."

Down by the water a tanned oldster, muscled and cheerful with white hair blowing in the wind, is expatiating on the importance of exercise. "It is good to run a little before entering the water." He demonstrates by jogging up and down. "Then the physique is warm, and the water is more beneficial." In company with a spirited troop whose average age seems to be seventy, he begins to do calisthenics, while not far away a small scattering of tourists loll indolently in canvas chairs. Considering the uncertainties and horrors which as Jews so many of these old people have experienced, it seems an injustice that even now they are not allowed to live out their lives in peace.

"It was really a Russian war," the soldier says, stretching out on the sand. "I knew it as a radio man. The Russians were speaking: Do this. . . . Do that. . . . I heard it myself. I speak Russian because my parents came from the Ukraine. Others heard also." (It is evident that the Russians made precise preparations to supply the coordinated attack on two fronts long before the actual beginning of the war. That experts and advisers participated is also clear; outposts apparently occupied by Russian advisers were captured, although the news that two Russian officers were taken on the Golan has not been confirmed.)

"So," the soldier appeals, "can we believe when the Arabs say that the battle is finished? The struggle will continue for generations to come."

An American sitting nearby tries to be less pessimistic, pointing out that after all there is a cease-fire. "Perhaps," the soldier says stubbornly, "they are only waiting, perhaps they want to stop the war in preparation for another and stronger war."

THE terrain of Israel itself—a scrap of land, tiny, stony, almost all desert, by nature unfruitful, without minerals, without oil—seems innocent enough. Yet here, upon the body of the country (as if on the flesh of Kafka's hero), the question of peace or war is being relentlessly hammered out.

We go up the coastal road toward the north, past orange groves bordered by thickets of cypress and pine, through Hadera and Afula, our destination the Golan Heights. Beyond Tiberias and after the ascent onto the plateau we stop to buy drinks at a Druze village which had been in Syrian territory before the 1967 war. The Druze, who are not Moslems and who are secretive about their religion, wear strange costumes—the men with full pants, almost Turkish in shape, the women in long black garments lightened with gay colors. One young woman, carrying a basket of flat bread, wears bright yellow socks, a dark skirt, and a gauzy blue blouse. A little girl with a plastic bag of apples fixes us with an unwinking gaze. The men in the shop explain that before '67, under the Syrians, their life had been hard. "We suffered," one says. "Under the Syrians it was a dictatorship, under the Israelis it is a democracy, there is no comparison between the regimes." He adds, "I speak not only from the mouth but from the heart." He then accepts a cigarette from the Israeli captain and gives a sly look at a man standing nearby, whose head is wrapped in a white cloth. "This is my relative. I have to get his permission to smoke because he is a religious man."

The man in the headcloth smiles graciously. He complains to the Israeli officer that they had had to study Islam under the Syrians. "There were examinations in all the schools, so our children could not avoid it. . . . Then when this war came, the Syrians bombed and killed our men. One died and about eight were wounded."

As we leave the village, with its peaceful and sheltered valley, its groves of apple trees, its women with bright blouses and dark skirts against the brownish earth, war seems far away. But later, as the car crosses that dark stony plateau which Syrian and Israeli troops contested so bitterly during two savage wars, the realities of death and destruction return: a terrain of reddish-brown crumbled basalt strewn with scarred tanks and broken half-tracks, bordered by low stone fences, decorated with memorials to the dead, and in the brilliant, now-cold sunshine, a bird appears, seeming out of place as it perches for a moment on a cairn of stones. Mt. Hermon

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shines with a yellowish color as if the snow were coated with dust swept from the plain.

"Over there is Damascus," one of the soldiers says—Damascus, that city so often described as pearl-like, which T.E. Lawrence entered after the defeat of the Turks in World War I, along a road where the pale sky was pricked by bursting shells like sheaves of yellow points, "into a dawn city of silent gardens, green with river mist"; the city to which Isabel and Richard Burton traveled to live a life "holy, solemn, and wild." But today it is the city where Jews have been tortured, the city which is most unambiguously hostile to Israel (although prisoners are also horribly maltreated in Cairo; although the burning-eyed Qaddafi in Tripoli says that, if necessary, "like Samson we will destroy the temple and all its occupants"; although Baghdad is also noted for its hangings and its urgings to destruction).

At a small dinner party in a Tel Aviv apartment, Syria is the subject of discussion—an uncomfortable subject, especially at this moment when Syrians hold more than 100 Israeli prisoners of war. The Red Cross has not yet been permitted to visit the prisoners, nor even given a list of their names; and it is now known that nearly 40 of those captured at an earlier time were found blindfolded and shot in the head. (There is no reason to suppose that either the Egyptians or Syrians were careful to treat their prisoners according to the terms of the Geneva Convention, or even to take them into custody; Egyptian Chief of Staff Saad Eddin Shazli's captured order of the day told the troops: "Kill them wherever you find them. Kill them and do not allow any of yourselves to act mercifully.") A young commando (what they call a paratrooper here), who took part in the assault on Syrian outposts, is present at dinner, and in a low voice he says of the prisoners discovered shot in the head: "They were lucky; better to be dead than to fall into the hands of the Syrians." There is a silence, and the company no doubt thinks of past Israeli experience with Syria and Iraq, of the final return of some Israeli prisoners of the '67 war to their homeland—broken and incoherent—and of the escape in early 1973 of Jews imprisoned in Iraq, bringing with them terrifying tales of the prisons. ("Soon it may be too late," one young Syrian Jew said in appealing for help to America, "the killing has started.")

Another guest at dinner is a doctor who has treated captured Syrian and Egyptian prisoners in various hospitals, and he describes the moods of the soldiers he has cared for—their admissions, in their weakness, of hatred of war, of dislike and distrust of their government, of resentment because during former wars their families at home did not learn of what had happened to them until months had passed, sometimes only when they actually walked into their houses. The doctor notes bitterly that nothing is spared for the welfare of enemy prisoners: "We share with them the precious drugs we are short of in our own hospitals. They receive the best of everything. . . . Perhaps we think hopefully that someone in Syria might be treating our own boys as well. . . ."

Out of this there comes again the question of the Soviet Union's attitude. There has been no public sign of her disapproval of Syria's physical and psychological cruelty. On the contrary, in the UN and also in official statements the Soviet Union has led in vindictive attacks ("in their mad destruction they [the Israelis] have annihilated and destroyed . . . ravaged entire countries," etc.). To anyone who watched the telecasts during the cease-fire negotiations at the UN, Malik's gestures and his air of contempt as he led the walk-out from the Assembly appeared completely out of proportion; even worse than on that famous occasion in September 1971, when he referred to Yosef Tekoah's "long nose," and dared to claim that "the Russians lost 20 million people to save the Jews."

In viewing such gymnastics it is important to pinpoint what lies behind the emotional subject-matter. There is no lack of historical background to be consulted. The parochial Stalin—distruster of true internationalism, admirer of Ivan the Terrible, anti-Semite who told his own daughter before her marriage, "The Jews put you up to it"—certainly helped to bind the legacy of anti-Semitism (immemorially extant in Russia) into the fabric of Soviet power. "In the last years of Stalin's life," Solzhenitsyn says, "a stream of Jews showed up in the camps, from 1950 on, dragged in as 'cosmopolitans.' For that purpose the Doctors' Plot was invented. It appeared that Stalin planned to mount a huge massacre of Jews. However, it was the first time in his life that one of his plans became unhinged. God ordered him . . . to leave his rib-cage." This apparent irrationality had been based upon Stalin's recognition that by their natural "cosmopolitanism" the Jews threatened his "total" power: a viewpoint which, as the revolutionary possibilities of the Middle East developed, came to be convenient for Stalin's successors as well. Israel, formerly "put up with," now became a stumbling block in Russia's way in the Middle East; what is more, after the 1967 war, a stumbling block which grew in power and importance—becoming, as Sadat later said in exaggeration, "like an empire." It was this virility and sense of survival on Israel's part which drew down upon her after 1967 a noticeable increase in an anti-Semitism which spread its infection from the Arab bloc, and from Russia and her satellites, south through Black Africa. A fantastic array of novels, tracts, revivals of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, appeared on the scene, together with the republication of the works of

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the notorious Soviet propagandist, Trofim Kichko.

But the best proof of the importance with which the Soviet government views the necessity of limiting Israel's power is demonstrated by the creation of a special Jewish Department in the Fifth Directorate of the Russian KGB (that long, gray stone structure which faces onto Moscow's Dzerzhinsky Square, and includes the famous Lubyanka prison in whose cellars so many thousands of citizens, courageous or trembling as the case may be, have been dragged to execution). The Fifth Directorate is the division created to obliterate political dissent and to reinforce controls over the Russian population; and the Special Jewish Department, only established in 1971 and therefore little known, has the apparent aim of recruiting Jews to infiltrate Jewish communities, of halting public protests, and of intimidating immigrants. (On January 17 the Jerusalem *Post* reported that ten-year-old Natasha Korenfeld in Moscow had received a menacing letter asking: "Do you want to be a victim of Israeli aggression?" Signed "Black September—British Section." The parents of the child, who had applied to emigrate to Israel, naturally suspected the KGB and pointed out that the letter was written in crude English, had a false London postmark, and was inadequately stamped. Similarly, last October, two Arabs forced their way into the Moscow apartment of Professor Andrei Sakharov, and threatened his life if he ever made a statement sympathetic to Israel: "We'll report your views back to headquarters and they'll decide what to do with you. . . . We have agents everywhere, in New York, in Moscow everywhere. We never warn people twice. . . . We can do something *worse* than killing you.")

TONIGHT in this quiet Tel Aviv apartment, only half a block from the Mediterranean shores, talk about Syria gives way to discussion of the relationship between that country and Russia. One of the guests, a non-Jew, a German who has lived in Damascus, explains that anti-Israeli feeling in itself forms a link between the governments, that Syria became a waystation for fleeing Nazis after World War II, and also recruited German ex-officers and NCO's as instructors for her new army. "There was always a certain kind of intolerance in Damascus. This was a tribal society . . . there was something as narrow as the streets of the old city. It didn't have to be the Jews. . . ."

As he talks it begins to be clear why Syria plays the role it does in the whole Middle Eastern situation. He describes the atmosphere in the coffee houses just before the leftist Neo-Ba'ath party came to power—the rumors, the arrests, the plots, the counter-plots, then the flow of Soviet arms coming in, the appointment of Communists to cabinet posts, the program set up to provide for Al Fatah.

"It is natural," he tells us. "Syria had a border with Israel. Partly because of that, partly because of her anti-Western stand, partly because of radicalization. All this encouraged the penetration of the Russians."

He talks about the Soviet Union's program of trying to turn Third World nations into client or satellite states. "The Russians made attempts to tune into religious feeling by talking of the 'absolute freedom' enjoyed by Soviet Moslems. This made some of us smile a little. . . . Then the Syrians were very impressed when ships began to come into Latakia with arms, and planes began arriving at Al-Hama airfield. . . . From this combination of arms and aid there sprang a real disinclination to criticize the Russians, and a general, quite natural blending of the propaganda of the two countries." (It was Syrian-Soviet cooperation in the field of propaganda before the 1967 war that resulted in the baseless rumor that fifteen Israeli brigades were gathering for an attack on Syria's border, thus precipitating the war.)

I ask about the organization of Palestinian groups. "Yes, Arafat was given the green light, but he still couldn't find enough students to recruit. The result was that the Syrian army itself established recruiting offices in the camps. . . . I was told that because of the shortage of volunteers, anyone was taken who had Arab blood, even those with criminal records. Now Syria has the largest number of commandos based in any Arab country." (According to the London-based Institute for the Study of Conflict, in 1970 As Saiqa, one of the terrorist groups, alone reported a total of 20,000 commandos, most of them earning more than regular army soldiers.)

The German goes on: "Syria is also the center for Palestinian conferences and for the central terrorist commands. You know that it has a large training center. There was that time in Turkey when it was found that the Soviet diplomat in Damascus, Vadim Shatrov, and a Soviet 'chauffeur' called Chernenkov, had helped to train some young terrorists from Ankara—the ones who killed three British radar technicians. And those who estimate these things agree that recently the number of Soviet military advisers in Syria had risen to 3,000—imagine that. Such tight control is maintained by the Syrian government on all operations that authorizations for raids are only given by top-level military authorities." What does this kind of control mean? "Well, at least it is significant because of key roles which any Syrian Communist agent might play—and this apart from the strength of the Russian influence." (An example of indirect influence in the Syrian secret service was the appointment of the obsessive Ahmad Suidani, a sympathizer with the Vietcong and Cuba who also visited China, and on an

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official trip to Moscow in 1964 was personally briefed on KGB tricks by chief Vladimir Semichastny.)

Did he like Damascus? "Like it? No—a beautiful city but violent, unexpected, and upsetting." He smiles. "When I was there there were anti-Israeli slogans everywhere. At the coffee shop I frequented they were written on the walls. At the corner newsstand they were stamped on the newspapers and on cigarette packages. . . . Not to speak of 'Death to the Jews' being a fairly common toast."

ALONG the sea front between Jaffa and Tel Aviv the remains of buildings shattered during the 1948 fighting still form a no-man's-land of destruction. Between the ancient Arab town and the new Tel Aviv, a mass of rubble, broken walls, gap-toothed houses, a small isolated minaret balanced against the blue sky—beyond this the golden Jaffa headlands jutting out into the sea.

Farther on the buildings are gray, moss-grown, stained—pierced by enormous wooden doors, by arches, by narrow, crooked lanes. On the Jaffa headlands reverent pilgrims still come to temples, monasteries, mosques, which form the last layer of a many-layered structure of distant epochs (Pharaonic, Greek, Israelite, Roman, Islamic, Christian). In one of the museums the bones of a Neolithic hunter-man (the earliest known inhabitant of the Tel Aviv area) can be seen ejecting from a block of hard earth cut out of a shelter pit in Jabotinsky Street. The teeth grin, the skeleton lies in the familiar foetal position, as if in mute appeal for protection; yet it seems just a step farther on to all the arts and deceptions of war, to the great woven baskets of the Egyptians, similar to those in which soldiers were hidden for the surprise attack which led to the capture of Jaffa in the 15th century B.C.E.

This Jaffa version of the Trojan horse is a reminder that infiltration of Israeli territory and border attacks by Arab terrorists are no longer the work of indignant Palestinians springing from the hills and wadis of their captured homelands, but rather that of an indoctrinated army. The reality is that Arab terror is not spontaneous, but "organized," with all that this implies. That Fatah, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP), Saiqa, etc. depend absolutely upon the help, bases, money, intelligence, radio stations, facilities (the use of diplomatic pouches, passports) given them by Arab governments, notably Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Libya, and Iraq. In some cases officials from Arab countries actually help out with terrorist acts; for instance, the Egyptian military attaché in London in March 1970 was found to have been involved in a plot to blow up an El Al airplane.

As Moshe Shamir maintains in *My Brother Ishmael*, there has been a displacement of history here; the dynamic which should have turned inward has become externalized and developed into a cancer "to eat at the very life-tissue of the Arab nations . . . these regions . . . that derive their . . . power from feeding the masses a daily opiate of stories of achievement, glory, victory. . . ." The enthusiasm of resistance has been used to buttress the ambitious needs of Arab nationalism, or of revolutionary Communism as the case may be, so that it is impossible to understand the *fedayeen* movement without giving due credit to two ideological hangups; the concept of *jihad* and the idea that the masses will be roused by radical action (which fosters a dependence upon popularized Marxist themes, and upon a mélange of mentors, heroes, literature, and guerrilla method).

I WALK down the old streets of Jaffa, where an Oriental-appearing culture takes over. Small factories are turning out furniture, tiles, engine parts. Piles of old clothes are being sold in the streets; several men loll on broken mattresses beside a confusion of carts, horses, and battered cars. The pleasant smell of horses mingles with a gutter smell. Old women are shapeless in garment after garment. Old men carry huge bunches of medieval keys. In the *suqs* they are selling brass, tinware, carpets, old household objects—Jews from Morocco, Persia, Iraq, flatter and cajole, and carry on a bantering trade with the few buyers available. Human emotions are more obvious here. Voices are louder. Children are wilder and dirtier. In one corner an old man urinates unashamedly. . . .

As EVENING approaches, foodsellers in the streets at the bottom of the hill stand behind tables laid out with skewered meat (pieces of lamb, chicken hearts, small sausages, chunks of liver) all festooned with green leaves, garlands of cilanthro, wreaths of hot red radishes. The smoke from the grills rises into the air and encircles the heads of the little boy from Gaza who washes dishes, and of the two North African girls who attend to customers. One calls to me: "*Moi, je suis Jeanne de Casablan'.*" An Arab sitting at a table nearby announces that he is a Christian and that his name is George. "Many good people named George . . . George Pompidou, George Washington, George, King of the Engleesh."

Jeanne de Casablan' stops the recital by calling out, "Also George Habash!," so that there is laughter, and a sudden quiet at the tables.

George Habash, head of the PFLP, was active as a Palestinian leader long before the time of Yasir Arafat, and was born in what is now Israeli territory. By 1970 he was in North Korea studying Kim Il Sung's strategy on how to defeat

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American imperialism (one of the subsequent exploits credited to his group was an attack with bazooka shells on a bright yellow Israeli school bus packed with five- to eight-year-olds). The momentary silence at the mention of Habash's name conjures up a past in Jaffa when those involved in the early struggles left children who were to become inheritors of the battle. (At least two of the Palestinian commandos were born in Jaffa—the strong-featured, elegant Ali Hasan Salamah who, according to Eric Pace, a New York *Times* correspondent, dislikes to be confronted or challenged; and Fakhri al-Amari, chain-smoker with a scar on his left arm. Both these leaders were trained in Communist countries, and both are important in what is called "Black September." Habash's group has links with China and North Korea.)

But titles like "Black September" are no more than names given to terrorist spearheads, useful to demoralize the civil population, to weaken confidence in a central authority like Israel, or to instill fear of the revolutionary movement in its enemies—for instance, those who aid Israel. The personnel and activities of such groups change with need. Again the question arises: To what extent is the Soviet Union influential in these groups, and in what way does it use that influence? If in the military sense the terrorist movement may not have been so far a determining factor, it has still acted as an agent for special tasks, for forcing concessions from Jordan or Lebanon, for stimulating retaliations, for seeing that Israel has remained constantly geared for battle. Internationally, however, its role has been more important; not only psychologically disruptive, but presenting a constant terrorist image to the world, and arresting the attention of the unsophisticated Third World; even, according to the Chinese view, encouraging the "colored" nations to confront the "white" West. What is more, for action-starved radicals in the democracies, the Palestinian leaders, though mostly from middle-class families, frustrated by their backward societies, and swayed by tales of glory from Cuba and Algeria—have provided a glamorous, "desert-warrior" image. (This view of the Palestinian is reminiscent of another comparison. As Drew Middleton remarks with regard to Hanoi, the "monstrous authoritarianism" that symbolizes Communism all over the world, suffers a sea change when it reaches Hanoi, where its practitioners are pictured as "Spartan democrats.")

THE question of how much the Russians (in what Theodore Draper describes as the "division of labor between the Arabs and the Soviets") are using the terrorists as "proxies" is one of the keys to that much larger question of world peace or world war, although here we must enter the complex realm of subversion which will at some time require its own historian. With a residue of ideological distrust for uncontrolled movements, the Russians seem to have treated the Palestinian commandos with caution until a certain turning-point in the late 60's. They stood to lose from a decisive policy, since any solid settlement of the Arab-Israel dispute would reduce Arab dependence upon Russian aid. (In the opinion of Brian Crozier, director of the Institute for the Study of Conflict, the Soviet Union needed nothing more than a disturbed status quo.) Whatever reluctance operated, it was certainly overcome by 1970, most probably long before, when Palestinian recruits were being dispatched to Russia to train in guerrilla warfare, and be converted into agents; this, under the direction of the GRU (the Soviet intelligence directorate and an appendage of the KGB). By May 10, 1971 (according to Vladimir Sakharov, a defector) an urgent top-secret order forbade all Soviet embassies from having any further open dealings with the Palestinians; and future contacts were channeled through the KGB or GRU officers in the field or through the Afro-Asian Solidarity Committees. But such dampening of publicity meant no lessening of subversive effort. An annual quota system for Middle East trainees was set up. (According to Sakharov, a certain number of recruits were to be dispatched from Kuwait, for instance, indoctrinated in Russia, and then infiltrated back into the local guerrilla movement; in addition, the PLO in Kuwait could be manipulated through Dr. Ahmad Khatib, a Soviet agent with a great hatred of the Kuwaiti royal family.)

By following the careers of professionals it is possible to get some idea of the stability of such programs. There is, for example, Sergei Petrovich Kiktev who, according to John Barron's book, *KGB*, has conspired with Arab terrorists for two decades. He abandoned his post as Soviet ambassador to Afghanistan in September 1972—and then went on to become ambassador to Morocco —after a well-known anti-Communist editor, Monahajudin Gahiz in Kabul, a devout Moslem, was killed by assassins in a Soviet jeep firing Soviet weapons. (Gahiz had long made a point of publicizing the use the Russians were making of Islam to further their ends; and before he was shot he was asked for the last time if he would cease his anti-Soviet writings.)

In the same year, Soviet help to the Palestinians became more open. After the Munich massacre, for instance, a special consignment of machine guns, mortars, and small arms was flown in directly from Russia to the Fatah arsenal at Al-Hama (while simultaneously Gromyko was busy deploring the "tragic events of Munich" and declaring that the UN must find it "impossible to condone terrorism"). It was Gromyko, in fact, who was the first high-ranking Soviet official to confer openly with a Palestinian leader, al-

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though as Radio Liberty pointed out on March 8 of this year, his meeting with Arafat was "only the logical outcome of a long-term policy" of cautiously searching for a suitable public figurehead to pass between Moscow and the guerrilla movement.

THE *fellahin* of Egypt and the Syrian peasants have been subjected to unprecedented intimidation since the failure of the '67 war by their respective governments, in an effort to make them into decent soldiers. Yet the rank and file of the *fedayeen* can also be seen as victims for all the romantic talk of a "cult of sacrifice." Ali Abad el-Biari, a thirty-two-year-old frogman captured in Israel in 1971, burst into tears in court and described his poverty. "They bought me for a paltry 100 Lebanese pounds. . . . Abu Yusef commutes in his big Mercedes between Beirut and Damascus and finds some pretty young men to drive him. . . . To the best of my knowledge he never participates in raids . . . he rounds up unfortunate men like me." The girls experience exploitation twice over. Rima Tannous, who paricipated in a hijacking, tells that she was an orphan taken to Jordan during the Six-Day War and forced to become the mistress of the doctor who initiated her into Fatah activities. Later she was drugged and raped by two guerrillas she fought with, and then beaten by the Jordanian police when captured. Two pretty, forlorn girls, the Dutch Yetti in a leather suit and hot pants, and the Peruvian Delia in a yellow dress with a pink bow in her hair, describe being duped into love-making at Rome hotels, then given suitcases (in which bombs had been placed without their knowledge) and put on planes to Israel where they were supposed to meet their lovers in a few days. "He is a criminal and he should be shot," judged Yetti. "He was tall and broad, but he lied to me," Delia states of the terrorist with whom she had spent a blissful week at the hotel. "Don't trust that kind of Arab!"

MY TRIP to Israel has coincided with an escalation of terrorism throughout the Middle East and Europe, with a ringing around of European airfields with tanks and troops, with rumors of missiles planted in trees and buildings, with proliferating stories that certain airlines were "paying for protection" and others not. All this makes it easy—perhaps essential—to project a future when, without any formal declaration of war, war will simply exist.

What seems relevant is that the terrorist arm that is so disruptive of Western life is only one section of the same war machine which threatens Israel. To investigate further is to realize that the balance of power in the world is slowly shifting, that all-out war of the kind we have just seen in the Sinai is already, in one sense, old-fashioned. Although in fact conventional war is likely to become more devastating than ever, in view of the costs of such warfare, it also seems probable that other kinds of struggle (the subversive, the terrorist, the psychological, the economic) will be escalated and refined. A potential example of this is Russia's program in the Middle East, where, according to Walter Laqueur, her conviction that oil concessions were the foundation of Western political influence made her embark on plans to alter the situation ("Oil for the Arabs," *Pravda* would headline, and "Oil in the Hands of the Working People" would run a slogan at a Soviet trade mission). It was probably with this in mind that during the early 60's the local Communists in the Middle East were ordered to concentrate their organizational efforts on oil workers. Later the KGB began to build terrorist cells in the oil sheikdoms south of Kuwait along the Persian Gulf, and to dispatch young men from the sheikdom of Qatar on scholarships to study in Russia.

But the actual development of this policy remains for the future. In case of need and as the opportunity arises, the Soviet Union would not only have the necessary terrorist arm to sabotage Western installations, but the trained personnel to fill the subsequent vacuum.

IN THE *Shabbat* streets of Tel Aviv it is curiously tranquil; although the scene of sunlit pavements, pines, and slightly dusty mimosas, of tourists strolling down from the big hotels near the beach, of little boys fresh from the synagogues wearing *yarmulkes* like their fathers, seems calm only until the news brings with it some fresh tragedy or horror (as in a nightmare when the sea's glassy surface is churned up by threatening underwater monsters). Apparently the Italian government is at last bringing to trial five armed infiltrators accused of attempting on September 5—the anniversary of the Munich massacre—to shoot down an El Al plane. It is another of those mad political crimes (the terror tales of our times). One defendant is let out on bail, but is later suspected of being Aatof Bassisso, a leader of "Black September"; the trial shows links with a clandestine arms network in Rome, and with the same Japanese gunmen who killed 24 and wounded 80 at the Tel Aviv airport last year.

Important in the Rome case is the possession by the defendants of the two Russian ground-to-air missiles found in their apartment in Ostia. The use of handy little missiles, capable of being carried by one person, and similar to those used to knock out Israeli tanks in the Sinai, suggests that the potential of guerrilla warfare is on the verge of being escalated. Philippe Bernert of *L'Aurore* reports that this pocket missile, the SAM-7, produced in Russia, is being sold for $1,000 in a certain Champs Elysées restaurant in Paris, with the sales pitch that "it can be used by

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any child." Nor are improvements in such weapons far away, since according to Crozier, scientists are warning that as the supply of fissionable material becomes more readily available, it is technically possible for a group of terrorists to assemble their own crude but effective A-bomb, or to adapt to their own needs techniques of bacteriological warfare.

A few days later, another attack is reported. At the guest house of Shefayim, a kibbutz just north of Tel Aviv, where the Mediterranean wind blows over arid sandhills first settled by tough Polish immigrants, low thorny plants cover the dunes. There is a purple flower on the cactus. Pines take on a tortured shape. Beyond, thickets of eucalyptus hang their leaves and papery bark in that adaptation to heat and thirst learned in the deserts of Australia. At the kibbutz beach, guests lie in the sun in bathing suits. One swims, one sits on the rocks fishing. The sound of anti-aircraft units practicing dissolves into the air with a decorative pattern of tiny white puffs of smoke.

In the big living room of the guest house, visiting Israelis and tourists (mostly Jews from the United States, England, France, Canada) wait for the news with a rapt and moody attention; while an older man soliloquizes on Henry Kissinger—who has offended him by referring to the "Jewish ghetto complex" of Golda Meir.

Entering the living room from the garden, from the freshness of the sea air, from the sandy dunes with their fragile rare flowers, from the sight of the small golden mandarins ripening in the glossy orchards around us, it is disrupting to see flashed on the TV screen the sickening news of yet another terrorist attack. This time it is a Pan Am plane waiting to take off at the Rome airport. Another scene of blood and disorder, of human beings scrambling for cover, of wounded on stretchers, of a hunched man, his coat peppered with bullet holes. The gunmen had opened fire in the middle of a screaming, weeping crowd; then shooting their way onto the outside runway they had tossed two fire bombs into the Pan Am Boeing, burning alive 28 people still strapped to their seats.

Discussion with Israelis about terrorism in general produces any amount of fascinating detail, but the problems raised go deeper than any one country and reveal a pattern even more pertinent to the world at large than to the Middle East.

In the Rome case there is a global linkup. The "Red Army" is a split-off from the official Japanese Communist party and descends from *Zengakuren*, the party's student affiliate. In 1970 the Red Army had been responsible for a plane hijacked to North Korea—an episode which was carried off with great drama, with uniforms, Samurai swords, and recitations of heroic verse in which the hijackers referred to themselves as "sons of occupied territories." Before this there had been contact with the PFLP which had set up a Tokyo office and recruited "Red Army" members for training in Lebanon. George Habash (who dismisses the atrocities of his group by claiming that "the worst is yet to come," and that a "third world war doesn't bother *us*") was thought to have been in contact with exiled members of the army when he was "studying" in North Korea. (The interesting thing is that as far as terrorists are concerned, North Korea seems to play a "nurturing" role, and to be operative as a "generalized" base. During the fantastic plot to undermine the Mexican government, which was masterminded from the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City in 1970 and exposed by the defection of a likable and sensitive woman employee, Raya Kiselnikova, the Mexican students, recruited and sent to train in North Korea, were passed from one group to another with such skill that at no time did anyone converse with a Russian—except Fabricio Gomez, an older and more hardened Mexican leader educated at Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow.)

But the human tragedy involved in such complicated subversion and/or terrorism is that while it is true that pathological characters with disturbances of authoritarianism gravitate to the terrorist banner (see Bobby Seale pontificating on August 9, 1969: "The first motherfucker that gets out of order had better stand by for some kind of disciplinary action"), there are also recruits of a more idealistic kind. In any event, blood and confusion obscure the fact that terrorism hides a graver transgression still, an encroachment upon world order itself. In contrast to a past when revolutionaries attacked repressive societies like Czarist Russia, the Austro-Hungarian empire, and France's *ancien regime*, the new international army is generally directed against liberal, Western, and Western-style democracies. What is more, the immediate targets—when the aim is not simply to create panic or political pressure—are often part of the democratic infrastructure. Knowledgeable prosecutors are killed (Ephraim Efrom); journalists and editors who publish freely (Monahajudin Gahiz or Salim al-Sharif); government officials who are against terrorism (Pierre Laporte or Wasfi el-Tal who suggested peace with Israel). The weapon of assassination can be as easily used by someone disturbed or fanatical, though not—as far as is known—clearly attached to a movement (Sirhan Sirhan, Lee Harvey Oswald)—as by a carefully trained guerrilla (India's New Delhi weekly *Orbit*, July 20, 1969, accused a KGB assassin of shooting down Tom Mboya, Kenya's intelligent pro-Western Minister of Planning). These killings aim at Western law, Western representative government, Western freedom of speech.

While the global onslaught is being intensified

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by technology; while terrorists armed with missiles have the use of radio, international telephone service, and jet travel, as well as being able to operate out of a string of safe bases (most of them in the Soviet Union, the East European satellites, Red China, North Korea, North Vietnam, and Cuba), while Russia plays the role of guardian of the peace, at once encouraging major wars like that with Israel and directing the small war of the terrorists (with the added advantage that whatever section of the international guerrilla arm is available to her can be claimed to be "Maoist" and out of control)—it is naturally hard for the ordinary citizen to understand what is actually happening. After the Lod massacre in which Japanese gunmen played a part, a dazed survivor is supposed to have asked a relevant question (*Time,* June 12, 1972): "How does it happen that Japanese kill Puerto Ricans because Arabs hate Israelis?"

To the long catalogue of terrorist crimes (especially criminal when they strike at innocents) must now be added Maalot, that unprovoked slaughter of Israeli children on May 16, when in a desperate attack by Israeli forces a wounded guerrilla was able in one last burst of strength to spray a crowded classroom with automatic fire. Sixteen students were killed and seventy wounded.

No less striking than the horror of this incident was the fact that (as Nayef Hawatmeh, leader of PDFLP, the group which claimed credit for the attack, admitted) "peace itself" was the target. In other words, it is the old story of Israel's mere existence being unacceptable; however pacific her intentions, the more insistently must she be forced into reprisals. (On the 23rd of the month, Palestinians were again found infiltrating across the Syrian border, armed with Russian guns, 30 hand grenades, and 22 pounds of explosive bricks. These guerrillas, who also belonged to the PDFLP, and two of whom were captured alive, admitted that they had been sent to demand the release of thirty imprisoned terrorists, and that if unsuccessful they were to carry out another "Maalot-style" massacre.)

Less dramatic, but of intense importance, is the reaction of the world press to Maalot. Not that the European and American papers did not condemn the wanton Palestinian brutality, but on a number of occasions reference was made to it as the work of "a lunatic fringe." (According to the New York *Times* editorial, "the Palestinian lunatic fringe has committed the most abominable yet of its long series of cowardly murderous outrages . . ." and again, "lunatic fringe posing fraudulently," etc.) This widespread acceptance of the separation between terrorists and the governments which give them house-room (plus money, training, weapons, diplomatic aid, etc.) and also the governments which exercise secret control in other ways, is a key political fantasy of our time. Not only does it bear uncomfortable witness to a brilliant propaganda job, and casts a shadow upon the hope of peace, it also suggests that those nations who have failed to prosecute the terrorists they capture (Britain, so long the home of principle and law, at one time equalized herself with Kuwait on this question) have fallen victim to their own self-deception. The West and "Western order" are at last face to face with a political Mafia; and Maalot becomes possible, as does Israel's reprisal, because a long sequence of such acts has gone unpunished.

The outside perimeter of political events, the international-political space from which numerous positions, perspectives, cultural clashes, are visible—often has a dream-like quality. Something between a vision and a nightmare. Beautiful and apocalyptic, it is like a picture drama by Hieronymus Bosch where we see men struggling to extract themselves from their human condition, and attempting to reach a plateau of salvation.

It is comforting to come back after this violent panorama of clashing values to the familiarity of the local scene, to the small view in the eye of the telescope, back to Tel Aviv, for instance, to the shabby beige backdrop of the buildings against which soldiers on leave exhibit the deep tan of the desert (with their generally dark hair and eyes and their olive-green uniforms, adding to the earth-colored note always present in Israel and so much in keeping with the muted foliage of the eucalyptus and casuarina). This color reminds one that Israel looks south—toward her ancient Semitic brothers, the Arabs, toward Africa, the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf. (The farther south one moves, the more profound and enveloping that somber tint.) And that Israeli society, a society in flux and as such momentarily unsure of its identity, is still essentially pluralistic—as is the United States, Europe, and Canada—and with its democratic and socialist traditions at variance both with the Arabic cultures which surround it, and the Russian mono-culture which tries to manipulate it.

At a time when plans have just been announced for an expansion of the Soviet merchant fleet, when Western defense experts are admitting to a Soviet nuclear establishment "staggering in size and depth," and talking of a Soviet "first-strike" capacity (with hawk Andrei Grechko—now in the Politburo—calling for "increasing vigilance" and "further military training") the Western nations, without protest, without clarification of their values, without marshaling their still great information-media sources to popularize their position around the world, passively accept the medieval methods (blackmail, terrorism, appeals to irrationality, assassination, subversion) into which the Soviet program has developed.

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Before leaving Israel and on a second trip to the Golan Heights, renewed activities on that frontier rouse old anxieties that it may be here that Israel will be drawn into a new phase of the battle. In the broadest sense, despite whatever temporary cessation of hostilities may be achieved, these heights are still a plateau of war. "The hateful, revengeful masses plunge into the road of revolution in a pressing and vehement fashion as pouring forces that burn everything that stands in their way"—this is only one of the sentences in the countless Fatah speeches, memoranda, pamphlets, poems, etc., filled with images of heat, force, fire, volcanoes, blood, churned out to exhort and proselytize as much for the "Revolution" as for the defeat of Israel. Standing here where new locations have been added to an infamous place list of unnecessary cruelties—Nafah, Hermon, the road to Migdal Shams, Dumeir, Hushneya Junction—this sentence might well be accepted as prose, for which the dark plains provide an illustration.

And if one is mindful that Israel was anxious to make concessions for peace and therefore ready to risk not being the first to strike, this frontier, which has moved back and forth in constant indecision, becomes more than ever symbolic. The United States and Europe should remember, then, that the line here may not be Israel's alone, but that of the entire democratic West.

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Vonnegut & His Audience

Edward Grossman

*Wampeters, Foma & Granfalloons** is the name of Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.'s new book, a collection of essays, reviews, speeches, etc. Only a writer with Vonnegut's power base could get a book of occasional writings published today, let alone get away with giving it such a title. Simply the sound of the apparently nonsensical words is enough to kindle recognition in those who have been initiated into Vonnegut's universe, and by the most cautious estimate the number of reader-initiates must be in the hundreds of thousands. The very definite *meaning* of these not-so-secret words is stored in the memories of probably almost as many people, and is fairly often retrievable and can be recited in paraphrase—the novel (*Cat's Cradle*) in which Vonnegut invented the words and originally set forth their meanings in 1963 has gone through thirty-two printings in the last four years. But *Cat's Cradle* is not the only book in which Vonnegut has made up words; in this practice, as in other ways, his work is of a piece, and once the reason is understood why any of his writing should have become immensely popular, it is understandable why all of his books—almost impossible to find in bookstores when first published—are now continuously in print. The prevalence of Vonnegut cannot be overstated. Another of his novels (*Slaughterhouse-Five*) has been translated into fifteen languages, and another (*Breakfast of Champions*) recently spent a year on the best-seller list, at the top of it much of that time.

If Vonnegut's work is widely known, his face and voice are not unfamiliar. He can fill the largest auditorium on any American campus or in any city with a public appearance. In the acoustically perfect Heinz Hall in Pittsburgh, which accommodates three thousand sitting down, and where the Pittsburgh Symphony occasionally draws a capacity audience, Vonnegut has spoken to more than three thousand, including standees. The Heinz Hall scene was strongly reminiscent of those that used to occur some years ago around the persons of Timothy Leary or Marshall McLuhan. A crowd of the knowledgeable and curious waited patiently for Vonnegut to be introduced. Many in the audience were obviously college students, but people were also there who could have been their parents, and it was not exclusively the young who had brought along paperback copies of one or another of Vonnegut's novels. Perhaps they hoped to have them autographed. To see the bright-colored covers flashing up and down the rows and aisles, however, was to fancy that these were book-talismans, like Mao's *Thoughts*, or the Bible. In fact, the evening did have an air of the mass audience with an oracle or prophet, of the kind Vonnegut himself treats satirically and somewhat ambiguously in several of his novels. This atmosphere was heightened, if anything, with Vonnegut's shuffling entrance onstage. A skinny, awkward figure in a rumpled suit, Vonnegut bears a resemblance to pictures of Mark Twain that will grow more striking as his hair and mustache turn white. He began by mumbling that he had no speech prepared. Having confessed this, he proceeded to ramble for something like an hour, in casual, homely, haphazard yet self-confident fashion over such topics as the legroom in Volkswagens and genocide. The overwhelming majority of his listeners were extremely attentive, sympathetic, and grateful, and ready to laugh at his jokes. Later, leaving, they seemed happy to have been there, and satisfied that they had got their money's worth (the price of admission was five dollars).

To be an American writer, and to be paid this kind of attention, especially by Americans born since World War II, is unusual and remarkable. Of course, collegians and college graduates and dropouts are said to like the work of other writers, too, and they can be seen voluntarily buying and reading these other books in paperback: the productions of Donald Barthelme, Ken Kesey, Joseph Heller, perhaps Thomas Pynchon and Joyce Carol Oates among the native novelists; Hermann Hesse and J. R. Tolkien from the Old World; and of the New Journalists, Tom Wolfe and Hunter Thompson and sometimes Norman Mailer. But Vonnegut is the champion—actually in a class by himself. The sale of his books and the love accorded them and their creator are such as are ordinarily reserved for the reading matter that caters best to a larger public's appetite for vi-

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olence, inside dope, and sentimentality, and those who produce it (examples are unnecessary). It is therefore not only in strict terms of the economics of publishing that Vonnegut may be said to have gained what amounts to power after years of feeling misunderstood and neglected, if not powerless.

Considering the ability of his books to hold the attention of large numbers of people in a society supplied with many distractions more vivid than books, it is not surprising that Vonnegut's standing with literary critics should be unsettled. Some seem to think he is suspect because his work enjoys a success that is anomalous for "serious" writing; others, having skimmed or read his books, say more or less that they are not worth a critic's time. Vonnegut is a "sententious old salt in ontological drag," the late Charles Thomas Samuels wrote in the *New Republic*, and his is "a bogus talent. . . . [He] can tell us nothing worth knowing except what his rise itself indicates: ours is an age in which adolescent ridicule can become a mode of upward mobility." According to Jack Richardson, Vonnegut is a "compiler of easy-to-read truisms." But as Benjamin DeMott sees it, "the kids' lighting on Kurt Vonnegut is an undeservedly good break for the age," and, in Leslie Fiedler's opinion, the Vonnegut novels do belong "to what we know again to be the mainstream of fiction," by which Fiedler does not mean what he calls "High Art," but rather "American Pop . . . the quest of the absolute wilderness." Graham Greene is less sly, more explicit: Vonnegut is "one of the best living American writers."

VONNEGUT's novels are full of stories—no plotless novels in the hyper-modern manner could have become so popular. They are also full of characters, surprises, episodes, suicides, apocalypses, science-fiction fantasies, morals drawn and underlined. And certain persistent motifs run through all of them. The Vonnegut hero is typically an American who has either been born or worked his way into what society considers a privileged position. But he is more than dissatisfied—he is ashamed, and tries to redeem himself by dropping out and associating with those believed less privileged, by helping the unwashed, the insulted, or merely exploited, the little people worn down by industrial and scientific consequences. Sometimes this saintly program is an obsession, an end in itself (*God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater*), sometimes a nagging temptation along the way of a quest or odyssey (*Player Piano; The Sirens of Titan; Cat's Cradle*). One way or another, it continually seems that it might be the right thing if the main character devoted what energy and ingenuity he had to it, in spite of the fact that he realizes such a program cannot change anything for the better, that the unfortunate are no more lovable or deserving than the intelligent, the high, and the mighty, and that in any event fate has an absurd and painful end in store for all.

To note this recurring theme is misleading, if it suggests that Vonnegut creates failed saints to study and dissect them, like a psychologist. With several exceptions, the characters, even the presumptive heroes, who appear and reappear in his novels are not deep enough and they do not stay in one place long enough to be studied as in a psychological novel. Mostly, Vonnegut's figures are mechanical contrivances bathed in a stroboscopic glare—fleshless robots galvanized by his will, moving jerkily toward the next joke, moral, or plot-advancing surprise.

Another thread: In all his novels, and even when he uses the whole universe for scenery, Vonnegut has originated this repertory of characters in upstate New York, Rhode Island-Cape Cod, and Indiana. In *The Vonnegut Statement,* a *Festschrift* compiled by some of his academic admirers in the Middle West, these locales are compared to Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County. As Vonnegut sketches them, the places are meant to seem sadly comic, haunted by American ghosts: of the coastal Indians and whalers, the Iroquois tribes and Erie canalmen, the pioneers. Technology and salesmanship have stripped and raped the land and divested the people of pride, leaving them ridiculous—mechanical men and women whom it is a duty to love. In his speeches, Vonnegut has explicitly blamed all this degeneration and suffering on American scientists and technologists, the inspired tinkerers, the sons of Edison in the employ of the Rockefellers and Rosewaters and the government. In his fiction, from the automated lathes in *Player Piano* to the incendiary bombs in *Slaughterhouse-Five,* the products of American know-how are nothing but unlovable—only late, in *Breakfast of Champions,* is a good word said for any product of modern technology and it turns out to be tranquilizers, which the narrator swallows to restore his chemical balance.

It is risking nothing to take a quick guess that some of these ideas about America—let them be called political instead of philosophical, though they are connected to no party or program—eventually helped Vonnegut's books win an appreciative audience among college-age readers and, later, their elders: it was a matter of waiting for the *Zeitgeist* to catch up. His politics—implied, inferred—are a factor in his appeal, and need to be examined. But while they may have become agreeable to an ever larger audience, it is probably the style that they, and the story line, are presented in which first pleased, delighted, seduced. Vonnegut's is a brief, repetitious style, rhetorically mock-naive, relying for effect on the regular delivery of a quantity of some kind of satisfaction every page or so. It arrives in the shape of a surprise, a moral, a giggle, a laugh. After what now looks like a false start in *Player Piano,* Vonnegut fastened on the form that works best with such a style: a series of self-contained, sometimes arbi-

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trarily divided, "chapters" of no more than five hundred words, often as few as fifty. "My books are essentially mosaics made up of a whole bunch of tiny little chips," he says in a *Playboy* interview reprinted in his new book, "and each chip is a joke." Whether he is speaking here in all honesty, or out of false modesty (he evidently thinks of himself as more than a comedian, and harbors exalted ideas of the role of writers), as a description of his method it is not bad.

Vonnegut's novels are constructed in a way that can also be likened to the structure of an old-fashioned cartoon booklet with figures painted in primary colors which is flipped with the thumb. *Cat's Cradle*, for example, has 121 "chapters," headed with ironical inscriptions like title-cards, contained in a grand total of 191 pages. The divisions between each "chapter" function like the frames between cartoons, so that read over quickly (as Vonnegut's novels are meant to be read on first encountering them, before going back to search out, talmudically, allegories, symbols, and designs), they blur into a semblance of motion. The effect is cinematic, as if a basic pattern, and resource, of the movies had been appropriated to a book without pictures.

THE AFFINITY of Vonnegut's work to comic books and the movies is suggestive regarding his popularity with a generation that was raised on these media and has its own ideas or feelings about what literacy is and what it is good for. Not only are Vonnegut's "chapters" short—so are his books; each one of them can be consumed in a sitting. His first, *Player Piano* (1952), which is about an engineer living some time in a totally technologized American future who joins in an abortive revolt against the machine, is the exception. It runs to 321 pages, with 35 chapters, divided along traditional lines of change of scene and passage of time. Vonnegut's pay-offs here are cumulative rather than instant and the style is generally more dense:

> Paul had thought often of the peculiar combination of Kroner and Baer, and wondered if, when they were gone, higher management could possibly duplicate it. Baer embodied the knowledge and technique of industry; Kroner personified the faith, the near-holiness, the spirit of the complicated venture. Kroner, in fact, had a poor record as an engineer and had surprised Paul from time to time with his ignorance or misunderstanding of technical matters: but he had the priceless quality of believing in the system, and of making others believe in it, too, and do as they were told.

It is a recognizable literary project in the approved manner, down to the basic device of casting a misfit in the anti-utopia. "I cheerfully ripped off the plot of *Brave New World*," Vonnegut told *Playboy*. Although the perfectly bad society that irks the hero is not coercive or totalitarian, but rather a benevolent welfare state where corporations look out for what they consider the public interest and bright young men in crewcuts do not get too drunk, *Player Piano* is another cautionary fantasy extrapolating from what is actual, in the tradition of Zamyatin, Huxley, and Orwell. Sometimes it also reads like *Babbitt*. It partakes in a gently pessimistic way of anger at what the boosters of mass production and the assembly line are doing to bodies and souls, and fear of what they may do still worse.

Player Piano, being a first novel, was not ignored, but it made no real dent on critics or the public. Some reviewers called it "science fiction," dismissively. "I have been a soreheaded occupant of a file drawer labeled 'science fiction' ever since," Vonnegut says in *Wampeters, Foma & Granfalloons*. "I would like out, particularly since so many serious critics regularly mistake the drawer for a tall white fixture in a comfort station." The circumstances of Vonnegut's early rejection are behind the portraits of writers and the ideas about the publishing business that he elaborates in all his books, and the legend that is cherished by his counter-cultural constituency.

To write *Player Piano*, Vonnegut had quit his job as public-relations man for the GE research laboratory in Schenectady. He now moved to Cape Cod and sold short stories to *Cosmopolitan*, *Saturday Evening Post*, and *Ladies Home Journal*, as well as to the science-fiction pulps. These stories, which Vonnegut says he wrote to buy time, and which have been collected in *Welcome to the Monkey House*, adhere to formula while mildly worrying the strain of disaffection evident in *Player Piano*. Their heroes are eccentric villagers, precocious dropouts, average U.S. citizens taking advantage of a windfall to improve their model train sets or HAM radio apparatus. In the meantime, *Player Piano* was issued in paperback, renamed *Utopia 14*. It took Vonnegut seven years to write the first of a couple of books (*The Sirens of Titan* and *Cat's Cradle*) that, with the help of the bosomy covers their publishers wrapped them in, assured his consignment to the demeaning science-fiction drawer. These novels made Vonnegut's underground reputation; in them he found his form and oracular voice.

The Sirens of Titan (1959) and *Cat's Cradle* (1963), unlike *Player Piano*, are fairly original in conception, quite consistent in tone. They are also highly contrived and as didactic as sermons. Here, in its entirety, is the first page of *Sirens*, which is about a war between Martians and Earthlings:

> Everyone now knows how to find the meaning of life within himself.
>
> But mankind wasn't always so lucky. Less than a century ago men and women did not have easy access to the puzzle boxes within them.
>
> They could not name even one of the fifty-three portals to the soul.
>
> Gimcrack religions were big business.

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> Mankind, ignorant of the truths that lie within every human being, looked outward—pushed ever outward. What mankind hoped to learn in its outward push was who was actually in charge of all creation, and what all creation was all about.
>
> Mankind flung its advance agents ever outward, ever outward. Eventually it flung them out into space, into the colorless, tasteless, weightless sea of outwardness without end.
>
> It flung them like stones.

This was one of Vonnegut's achievements, that he could make a certain audience read what are essentially books of ideas, using multiple plots, self-consciously intricate designs, and flashy characters, and intruding himself continually, without breaking the spell. A load of moralistic message is what puts *Sirens* and *Cat's Cradle* into the category of science fiction—more precisely, into that subcategory of science fiction, fantasy, that depends, for credibility, not on detailed descriptions of possible machines or experiments with nature, but on a seamless web of dreaming about a universe that can never be, populated by impossible beings, humanoids embodying urges and ideas.

It is more the stuff of teleology than ontology; paperback readers who do not know the meanings of these words can appreciate that the dreamlike quests of Vonnegut's heroes in fantastic worlds and universes are about finding purpose here, in this world. And purpose there is, finally. The mocking voice, seemingly parodying itself, denying any aim in life, demands not to be believed, yet always taken seriously—this is the unspoken understanding between writer and reader in Vonnegut's books.

Preachy as it is, the voice never talks down, nor does it depress. It is breezy, charming, confidential, fully clued in to the popularity of sticking gun turrets on model aircraft carriers with Duco cement, and other pre-pubescent American joys; it shares rather than imparts dark-sounding truths, funny jokes. An American "kid" who had bought *Sirens* or *Cat's Cradle* in a bus station (both novels were published only in paperback, went unreviewed) could wish when done reading that the author was a terrific friend of his, whom he could call up on the phone whenever he felt like it. In fact, during the years when rare copies of *Sirens* were being sold for up to fifty dollars, many of Vonnegut's young enthusiastic readers did that, and turned his house into a place of pilgrimage. Vonnegut, unlike Salinger, was no recluse; the difference between the two writers' unofficial popularity will tell something about cultural changes between the 50's and today.

An anti-scientific bias is also less unusual, more popular now than fifteen years ago. "You scientists *think* too much," a Miss Pefko says in *Cat's Cradle*, which ends with the end of the world. A marked animus against scientists, and thinking, and a propensity to toy with apocalypse, characterize all of Vonnegut's books. He has another preoccupation. Except in two books, it is never more than continually alluded to. The Martian soldiers in *The Sirens of Titan* "wore knee spikes, and glossy black uniforms. . . . Their insignia was a skull and crossbones." Von Koenigswald, saintly jungle doctor of *Cat's Cradle*, has "the terrible deficit of Auschwitz in his kindliness account."

World War II, the Nazis, the war's long-lasting effect on individual Americans and America, are themes that loom large for Vonnegut for autobiographical and other reasons. He gets around to facing them directly in *Mother Night* (1961) and *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969).

At first, it seems that *Mother Night* is intended as the study of an insane man, in the form of that well-known fictional conceit, the self-portrait or confession. "I've always been able to live with what I did," writes Howard W. Campbell, an American double agent awaiting trial in Israel as a Nazi war criminal. "How? Through that simple and widespread boon to modern mankind—schizophrenia." To try and create a character who will bear scrutiny would seem to be a departure for Vonnegut, albeit he uses here the same episodic style dotted with jokes and epigrams. The reader of *Mother Night* is asked to believe that he has before him the testament of a 20th-century lunatic of medium notoriety, trying to come to terms, under the shadow of death, with the ambiguities of his life story. In and out of this story move personalities he has been acquainted with named "Goebbels," "Eichmann," "Hess." This is a very ambitious project—locating a publicly harmful madman within modern history, undercutting revulsion for him by showing his all-too-human, even sympathetic sides, never losing sight of his diseased soul under the welter of well-known documentary facts that needn't be mentioned but are, and always, "in his own words."

The prime prerequisite in a confessional novel has always been that the novelist get inside his creature, becoming invisible. Nabokov did this with Humbert Humbert, also a disturbed man in jail, Salinger with Holden Caulfield, Roth (almost) with Alexander Portnoy. However, Howard Campbell's words are not all his own; many of them, and his ideas and sentiments as well, are Vonnegut's. Instead of strategically subsuming his intentions in Campbell's craziness, Vonnegut mainly uses him as a mouthpiece, so that *Mother Night* quickly turns into an exercise in ventriloquism. Often the voice does not even trouble to disguise itself, and sounds just like the one in Vonnegut's speeches, saying the same things—for example, that infantrymen are morally superior to their officers or the air force. It is no more possible to believe Campbell when he says he was "a loathsome anti-Semite" than it would be if Vonnegut said this of himself. Rather than a "split

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personality," Campbell seems to be a harmless fellow who became a Nazi in a fit of absent-mindedness, and an American agent in the same way. The motivation that Vonnegut suggests in his preface to *Mother Night*—that Campbell, a playwright by profession, played roles in real life—is not borne out by the characterization.

If *Mother Night* were intended as a psychological novel, the flat characterization of Campbell could be blamed for the book's failure to move beyond the level of a slapstick, melodramatic spy story. But the main intention is, again, moralistic, and the book is a vehicle for messages, attached this time to events and personalities in the unimagined world, in a contemporary history that is already legendary for younger readers. The message is to the effect that reality and men are such masses of contradiction, that, among other things, it is useless saying who is finally villainous or heroic, though villainy and evil are obvious. As for what looks like unmitigated villainy, the best one can do, looking back, is provoke laughter at it. Eichmann was more laughable than sinister—even in 1941, when Campbell met him in Berlin.

Günter Grass wrote raucously in *The Tin Drum* without in the least depriving Nazism of an aura of important, brutal force, or getting smeared by nearness with sentimentality. Vonnegut makes the Nazis, and by implication, evil itself, seem absurd, ridiculous, and inevitable. To counter it, he enlists laughter, but not only that.

Campbell in conversation with a New York cop:

> "I guess there were good people killed on both sides," he said.
> "I think that's true," I said.
> "You think there'll be another one?" he said.
> "Another what?" I said.
> "Another war," he said.
> "Yes," I said.
> "Me too," he said. "Isn't that hell?"
> "You chose the right word," I said.
> "What can any one person do?" he said.
> "Each person does a little something," I said, "and there you are."

This throwaway presages the famous refrain in *Slaughterhouse-Five,* "So it goes," a counterpoint to facts that are stranger than fantasy, recitations of stupidity or moral obtuseness in high places, the hideous suffering of ordinary people. While *Mother Night* is grotesque, like mummery on a stage, *Slaughterhouse-Five,* Vonnegut's first hardback best-seller, has a maudlin feel about it. Both books present the spectacle of a writer facing the world, trying to write saving myths about it using documentary material.

That this is what Vonnegut was about in *Slaughterhouse-Five* can easily be inferred. The story—told by a narrator who is a writer established on Cape Cod—concerns a harmless optometrist, Billy Pilgrim who, as a prisoner of the Germans in World War II, lived through the American bombing of Dresden and is obsessed to the point of madness with the memory. Coming "unstuck," Billy lives simultaneously on earth and on the planet Tralfamadore where he learns a new religion of stoicism. The kinship of Billy Pilgrim with his namesake in Bunyan, not to mention Christ and Everyman, is obvious. The style, "in the telegraphic schizophrenic manner of the planet Tralfamadore," attempts to get at something by accretion of extremely unconnected bits in time and space, and the bombing of Dresden actually disappears in the shadows thrown by placard-like announcements from the narrator: "I have told my sons that they are not under any circumstances to take part in massacres, and that the news of massacres of enemies is not to fill them with satisfaction or glee."

More than once in *Slaughterhouse-Five,* the narrator pronounces the book he is writing a failure, though this will not keep him from letting it be published. He makes himself a promise that his next book will be only "fun." That turned out to be *Breakfast of Champions,* last year's best-selling favorite about a fifty-year-old writer who resolves to clear his head by setting free the creatures of his imagination who have served him in numerous novels. *Breakfast of Champions,* as seemingly miscellaneous as *Slaughterhouse-Five,* is the summation of the discoveries Vonnegut has made in writing, the whole held together by the crude drawings he supplies to illustrate it. It is like a children's encyclopedic picture album with detours and definitions, naming the animals, presuming to treat as if for the first time of pornography, suicide, racism, and madness in Middle America, without neglecting the plot, or despairing of methods of salvation proposed in earlier novels. The drawings are the logical goal of Vonnegut's writing over the years. They supplement the words, and begin substituting for them. They are meant, in their crude friskiness, to increase the horror by playing against it, as a comedian in silent films might deadpan against a hilarious or hazardous situation. The effect is not necessarily the one intended. They also mean to charm, to draw forth love and mercy, and there can be no doubt that for some reader-viewers they succeed.

One may give Vonnegut credit for fixing on a prose and picture style that fits his purposes and his powers, without implying that he discovered it in unexplored territory or that he has had no precursors. The stories of George Ade—an Indiana humorist and ironist almost completely forgotten now—are characterized by a blackout style as in burlesque-house sketches. Nathanael West's books are parables about failed Christians made of neon tubing instead of flesh and blood. In his anti-intellectualism and depiction of scientists, too, Vonnegut is in a tradition—that of science fiction, and especially science-fiction movies. "Disinterest-

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ed intellectual curiosity," Susan Sontag has commented about this tradition, "rarely appears in any form other than caricature, as a maniacal dementia that cuts one off from normal human relations." But it is not enough to say that Hoenikker, the atomic scientist in *Cat's Cradle*, was a cliché ten years ago. It is necessary to add that this cliché speaks with increasing force to a generation of students, and their parents who take after them, because of what they read in the papers and breathe in the air. "I was in Dresden," Vonnegut says, "when America dropped scientific truth on it."

IT SEEMS particularly unlikely that novels and speeches so popular with young Americans as Vonnegut's are should keep coming back to deal with World War II; that war is distant, legendary, boring. It is the war of the fathers and grandfathers, not the sons—whose war has been Vietnam, even if they have not fought in it, even if they have not dodged the draft or demonstrated against it. Before taking a guess as to how Vonnegut gets them to listen to tales of his generation's war, three pieces of biographical information might be introduced; Vonnegut often harps on two of the three himself, in prefaces to his novels, in the novels themselves, in his speeches. First, his parents—atheists, pacifists, believers in the Constitution—though Americans long established in the Middle West, remembered not without pride that the family came from Germany; second, Vonnegut, a POW, happened to be in Dresden (like Billy Pilgrim in *Slaughterhouse-Five*) when the Allies bombed it; the third fact, which Vonnegut never mentions, is that some of his earliest writings, published in the Cornell student newspaper in 1941, were editorials lampooning preparedness and Lend Lease and propagandizing against American intervention in the war against Hitler.

Vonnegut's German extraction, which made him briefly feel like an outsider in America, though white and Protestant, and especially his presence in Dresden as an American under American bombs, are autobiographical facts transmuted continually and none too subtly into his fiction, putting a new and more topical slant on ancient history. His editorials in the Cornell *Sun* (reprinted in *The Vonnegut Statement*), also display a tone and push ideas about warmaking which have not changed since Vonnegut was a sophomore. They could still appeal to college students today. The editorials, in fact, were run as humor or joke columns under Vonnegut's byline, and though some of them were earnest appreciations of Charles Lindbergh, most strove to make their point in much the same way that Vonnegut still tries to—by provoking laughter, for instance, at ROTC bayonet drill.

Vonnegut anticipated a succeeding generation of students in their suspicions of, if not contempt for, official institutions. Having been in Dresden, and then finding no reliable report of the raid in official Air Force histories, taught him, he says, that the American government lied. The lesson is not lost on those who know about the Pentagon Papers and Watergate. Perhaps more significant still, Vonnegut's recurring reference to having been firebombed by his own countrymen lends him cachet, though he denies (in both *Slaughterhouse-Five* and *Wampeters, Foma & Granfalloons*) that Dresden changed him much. He was present at a fiery massacre—a holocaust—planned and carried out by "our side." This gives him, his work, and his opinions, additional importance and validity in the eyes of his audience.

Although the pacifism Vonnegut preaches is couched in absolute terms, and his imaginary ideal American hero is a man who absolutely refuses to kill or be a party to killing, Vonnegut does not fail to say in speeches now that during his war the enemy deserved to be crushed by any means—so long as innocent, defenseless people (for example, the Dresdeners) were not incinerated. Vonnegut is not unaware of the tortured relation of guilt and innocence, and of the practical difficulty, probably the impossibility once the logic of total war is rolling, of sparing civilians. Indeed, he is ever ready to indicate moral dilemmas and paradoxes, in the best manner of innocence lost, while never really altering or complicating the thrust of his simple, absolute preachment.

The preacher is a sinner, too, of course; he does not deny it. In denying his own virtue Vonnegut can go to such extremes of language and hypothetical example that one can either be disarmed by his honesty, or begin suspecting that this writer not only has the power to do harm, but actually does it—by the crude, unreal, and actually soothing pictures of human behavior that he draws. "If I'd been born in Germany," he says in the preface to *Mother Night*, "I suppose I would have been a Nazi, bopping Jews and Gypsies and Poles around, leaving boots sticking out of snowbanks, warming myself with my secretly virtuous insides. So it goes."

Cartoon characters "bop" each other, painlessly. Vonnegut's choice of words is his own. His purblindness, perhaps willed, to the difference between being a murderous member of a murder organization, and being so human as to refrain from joining the Resistance, is also typical, though this vision is not his exclusively; in a recent French movie about the Occupation, a boy joins the *Milice* rather than the *Maquis*, and he does it by chance. On the face of it, when these revisions are not simply the defeated side's getting its own back after letting things settle for a generation, they look like truth-telling, because they seem to complicate by describing reality as random. History has come to this, that only what leaves us bereft can pass for the truth. Villains and heroes do not exist in such accounts, needless to

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say, but neither do any humans, if humans think, decide, act, regret. Yet Vonnegut's fictions, with their flat characters who are put through their paces to make the author's humanistic point ("only humans are sacred"), most probably do not leave Vonnegut's devotees feeling empty or sad.

Vonnegut is not an apologist for evil, nor does he mean to sound neutral; he is sure it exists, and that he knows what it is—he could not be so popular if he did not. Of World War II he says in *Wampeters, Foma & Granfalloons*, "We had fought something which was totally obscene." That is only the beginning, however, for "this was very bad for us." The war against Hitler gave Americans a long-lasting sense of righteousness and of a global mission finally expressing itself, he says, in what Lieutenant Calley did at Mylai. If the after-effects of Vonnegut's generation's war were bad for America, they were and continue to be worse for people in the rest of the world, because of the power America acquired to harm with its good intentions. In Vonnegut's books, greed and narrowmindedness go with self-righteousness and power. The world is on the road of war, pollution, and starvation, of final extinction around the corner, and so far as humans can be, his generation of Americans is responsible for this.

DURING the last decade or so such ideas have become common currency in this country, and surely would have even if Vonnegut had not contributed his share. Obviously it takes more to attract the young than to blame the world's troubles on their parents. In fact, it would be bizarre if reading or listening to Vonnegut set a young person against his elders, or reinforced a previous hatred or contempt. Vonnegut's anger at his generation is mild, as his pessimism concerning the human prospect is gentle, and presumably all-inclusive: though he sympathizes with the young founders of backwoods communes, who try to adapt Bokononism (the religion of fatalism practiced in Tralfamadore) to their separate realities, he has little or no hope of their success. It is either too late for that, or it is written somewhere, in the book of Fate, that these experiments, too, are doomed.

"Everything is going to become unimaginably worse, and never get any better again," Vonnegut told the graduating class at Bennington, when the shootings at Kent State were fresh news in 1970. "If you want to become a friend of civilization," he said to the girls, "then become an enemy of truth and a fanatic for harmless balderdash." He told the crowd at Heinz Hall in Pittsburgh some of the same things, to its evident pleasure, and without a doubt to the dismay of a few in the audience, who on that occasion held their tongues. They do not always. Vonnegut says in his new book that one of the reasons he no longer gives so many speeches is that "a recent refugee from Middle Europe" interrupted him once with the question, "You are a leader of American young people—What right do you have to teach them to be so cynical and pessimistic?"

But one can only understand the anger of Vonnegut's Czech or Polish questioner if one is convinced of many things—that the Vonnegut phenomenon is a cultural-political test case, that books really are bisected into "High Art" and "Pop," that taste is debased, that books are important. Most of all, one would have to believe, as Vonnegut says he does, that good or bad ideas in books have the power to do good or to harm.

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Crime and the Criminologists

James Q. Wilson

THE "social-science view" of crime is thought by many, especially its critics, to assert that crime is the result of poverty, racial discrimination, and other privations, and that the only morally defensible and substantively efficacious strategy for reducing crime is to attack its "root causes" with programs that end poverty, reduce discrimination, and meliorate privation. In fact, however, at the time when their views on crime were first sought by policymakers (roughly, the mid-1960's), social scientists had not set forth in writing a systematic theory of this sort. I recently asked three distinguished criminologists to nominate the two or three scholarly books on crime which were in print by mid-1960 and which were then regarded as the most significant works on the subject. There was remarkable agreement as to the titles: *Principles of Criminology,* by Edwin H. Sutherland and Donald R. Cressey, and *Delinquency and Opportunity,* by Richard A. Cloward and Lloyd E. Ohlin. Agreement was not complete on the validity of the views expressed in these books. Quite the contrary; criminologists then and now debate hotly and at length over such issues as the cause of crime. But these two books, and others like them, are alike in the way questions are posed, answers are sought, and policies are derived—alike, in short, not in their specific theories of delinquency, but in the general perspective from which those theories flow. And this perspective, contrary to popular impression, has rather little to do with poverty, race, education, housing, or the other objective conditions that supposedly cause crime. If anything, it directs attention away from factors that government can control, even if only marginally, to move beyond the reach of social policy altogether. Thus when social scientists were asked for advice by national policymaking bodies on how to reduce crime, they could not respond with suggestions derived from and supported by their scholarly work. In consequence, such advice as they did supply tended to derive from their general political views rather than from the expert knowledge they were presumed to have.

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I

IN the 1960's the prevalent social-science perspective on crime found its most authoritative development in the treatise by Sutherland and Cressey whose seventh edition appeared in 1966, just after President Johnson appointed his crime commission. In this work Sutherland and Cressey reviewed various "schools of criminology" and faulted all but the "sociological" approach, according to which criminal behavior is learned by a person in intimate interaction with others whose good opinion he values and who define crime as desirable. The "classical" theories of Bentham and Beccaria were rejected because their underlying psychological assumptions—that individuals calculate the pains and pleasures of crime and pursue it if the latter outweigh the former—"assume freedom of the will in a manner which gives little or no possibility of further investigation of the causes of crime or of efforts to prevent crime." The hedonistic psychology of Bentham, in short, suffered from being "individualistic, intellectualistic, and voluntaristic." Theories based on body type, mental abnormality, or mental illness were also rejected because the available data were inconsistent with them. Criminals were no more likely than law-abiding persons to have a certain stature, to be feeble-minded, or to suffer from a psychosis.

As for poverty—defined as having little money —Sutherland and Cressey's references to its impact were few and skeptical. Sutherland was quoted from his earlier writings as observing that while crime was strongly correlated with geographic concentrations of poor persons, it was weakly correlated (if at all) with the economic cycle. That is, crime might be observed to increase as one entered a poor neighborhood, but it was not observed to decrease as neighborhoods generally experienced prosperity. Furthermore, Albert K. Cohen (to whom Sutherland and Cressey refer approvingly) had shown that much of the delinquency found among working-class boys was

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"non-utilitarian"—that is, consisted of expressive but financially unrewarding acts of vandalism and hell-raising—and that these acts were more common among this group than among middle-class boys. If economic want were the cause of crime, one would predict that delinquency for gain would be more common among those less well-off and delinquency for "fun" more common among the better-off. Yet the opposite seemed to be the case. "Poverty as such," Sutherland concluded, "is not an important cause of crime."

Nor could being a member of a minority group and experiencing the frustrations produced by discrimination explain crime for Sutherland and Cressey: while the experience of Negroes, whose crime rate was high, might support such a theory, that of the American Japanese, whose crime rate was low, refuted it. Poverty and racial segregation might serve to perpetuate crime, however, to the extent that these factors prevented persons from leaving areas where crime was already high and thus from escaping those personal contacts and peer groups from which criminal habits were learned.

THERE were in 1966 other theories of crime in addition to Sutherland and Cressey's. Most of these were reviewed in their treatise and though criticisms were sometimes made, the governing assumptions of each were quite compatible with what the authors described as the sociological approach. Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck, for example, produced in the 1950's a major effort to predict delinquency, and while the idea of predicting delinquency became controversial on grounds of both fairness and feasibility, their empirical data on factors that helped cause delinquency were not seriously challenged. They argued and supplied data to show that among the key variables distinguishing delinquents from non-delinquents were those related to family conditions—chiefly stability, parental affection, and the discipline of children. Walter B. Miller also argued that delinquency was in large part an expression of the focal concerns of lower-class youth. Toughness, masculinity, "smartness," the love of excitement, and a desire for personal autonomy were valued by lower-class persons to a greater degree than by middle-class ones, and acting on the basis of these values, which were maintained by street-corner gangs, inevitably placed many lower-class boys (and some girls) in conflict with the laws of the middle class. Albert K. Cohen further suggested that delinquency was in part the result of lower-class youth striving, not simply to assert their focal values, but to repudiate those middle-class values which they secretly prized.

These and other sociological theories of crime, widely known and intensely discussed in the 1960's, had certain features in common. All sought to explain the causes of delinquency, or at least its persistence. All made attitude formation a key variable. All stressed that these attitudes were shaped and supported by intimate groups—the family and close friends. All were serious, intelligent efforts at constructing social theories, and while no theory was proved empirically, all were consistent with at least some important observations about crime. *But none could supply a plausible basis for the advocacy of public policy.*

This was true for several reasons. By directing attention toward the subjective states that preceded or accompanied criminal behavior, the sociological (or more accurately, social-psychological) theories directed attention toward conditions that cannot be easily and deliberately altered. Society, of course, shapes attitudes and values by its examples, its institutions, and its practices, but only with great difficulty, slowly, and imprecisely. If families inculcate habits of virtue, law-abidingness, and decorum, it is rarely because the family is acting as the agent of society or its government, but rather because it is a good family. If schools teach children to value learning and to study well, it is not simply because the schools are well-designed or generously supplied, but because attitudes consistent with learning and study already exist in the pupils. One can imagine what government might do if it wished to make good families even better or successful pupils even more successful: more resources might be offered to reduce burdens imposed by want, but the gains, if any, would likely be at the margin.

If it is difficult by plan to make the good better, it may be impossible to make the bad tolerable so long as one seeks to influence attitudes and values directly. If a child is delinquent because his family made him so or his friends encourage him to be so, it is hard to conceive what society might do about this. No one knows how a government might restore affection, stability, and fair discipline to a family that rejects these characteristics; still less can one imagine how even a family once restored could affect a child who by now has left the formative years and in any event has developed an aversion to one or both of his parents. Government could supply the lower class with more money, of course, but if a class exists because of its values rather than its income, it is hard to see how, in terms of the prevailing theory, increasing the latter would improve the former.

If, similarly, the lower class has focal concerns that make crime attractive or even inevitable, it is not clear how government could supply it with a new set of values consistent with law-abidingness. Indeed, the very effort to inculcate new values would, if the sociological theory is true, lead the members of that class to resist such alien intrusions all the more vigorously and to cling to their own world-view all the more strongly. Peer

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groups exist, especially for young people, as a way of defending their members from an alien, hostile, or indifferent larger society and for supplying them with a mutually satisfactory basis for self-respect. A deviant peer group—one that encourages crime or hell-raising—would regard any effort by society to "reform" it as confirmation of the hostile intent of society and of the importance of the group.

II

THE problem lies in confusing causal analysis with policy analysis. Causal analysis attempts to find the source of human activity in those factors which themselves are not caused—which are, in the language of sociologists, "independent variables." Obviously nothing can be a cause if it is in turn caused by something else; it would then only be an "intervening variable." But ultimate causes cannot be the object of policy efforts precisely because, being ultimate, they cannot be changed. For example, criminologists have shown beyond doubt that men commit more crimes than women and younger men more (of certain kinds) than older ones. It is a theoretically important and scientifically correct observation. Yet it means little for policymakers concerned with crime prevention since men cannot be changed into women nor made to skip over the adolescent years. Not every primary cause is itself unchangeable: the cause of air pollution is (in part) certain gases in automobile exhausts, and thus reducing those gases by redesigning the engine will reduce pollution. But social problems—that is to say, problems occasioned by human behavior rather than mechanical processes—are almost invariably caused by factors that cannot be changed easily or at all, because human behavior ultimately derives from human volition—tastes, attitudes, values, or whatever—and these aspects of volition are in turn formed either entirely by choice or are the product of biological or social processes that we cannot or will not change.

It is the failure to understand this point that leads statesman and citizen alike to commit the causal fallacy—to assume that no problem is adequately addressed unless its causes are eliminated. The preamble to the UNESCO charter illustrates the causal fallacy: "Since wars begin in the minds of men it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed." Yet the one thing we cannot easily do, if at all, is change, by plan and systematically, the minds of men. If peace can only be assured by doing what we cannot do, then we can never have peace. If we regard any crime-prevention or crime-reduction program as defective because it does not address the "root causes" of crime, then we shall commit ourselves to futile acts that frustrate the citizen while they ignore the criminal.

Sutherland and Cressey commit the fallacy; yet, being honest scholars, they provide evidence in their own book that it *is* a fallacy. "At present," they write, "the greatest need in crime prevention is irrefutable facts about crime causation and sound means for transforming that knowledge into a program of action." Suppose it could be shown that their own theory of crime causation is irrefutably correct (it may well be). That theory is that individuals commit crime when they are members of groups—families, peers, neighborhoods—which define criminal behavior as desirable. The policy implication of this, which the authors draw explicitly, is that the local community must use the school, the church, the police, and other agencies to "modify" the personal groups in which crime is made to appear desirable. No indication is given as to how these agencies might do this and, considering what the authors and other sociologists have said about the strength and persistence of family and friendship ties, it is hard to see what plan might be developed.

But we need not merely raise the theoretical difficulties. A series of delinquency-prevention programs have been mounted over the decades, many if not most of which were explicitly formed on the strategy of altering primary-group influences on delinquents. Almost none can be said on the basis of careful, external evaluation to have succeeded in reducing delinquency. Sutherland and Cressey describe one of the most ambitious of these, the Cambridge-Somerville Youth Study in the late 1930's. The differences in crime between those youths who were given special services (counseling, special educational programs, guidance, health assistance, camping trips) and a matched control group were insignificant: " 'the treatment' had little effect." Perhaps a better program would have had better results, though it is striking that for some a "better" youth project is one that moves beyond merely providing concentrated social-welfare services to deliquents because these services do not address the "real" cause of crime. William and Joan McCord, in *Origins of Crime*, for example, draw the lesson from the Cambridge-Somerville study that the true causes of delinquency are found in the "absence of parental affection" coupled with family conflict, inconsistent discipline, and rebellious parents. They are quite possibly correct; indeed, if I may speak on the basis of my own wholly unscientific observation, I am quite confident they are correct. But what of it? What agency do we create, what budget do we allocate, that will supply the missing "parental affection" and will restore to the child consistent discipline supported by a stable and loving family? When it comes to the details of their own proposals, they speak of "milieu therapy" in which the child is removed from his family and placed in a secure and permissive therapeutic environment of the sort developed by Dr. Bruno Bettleheim for autistic

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children. Conceding that such a program is frightfully expensive, they urge that we attempt to reach fewer children than under conventional programs, and presumably keep each child for a relatively long period. That parents, children, taxpayers, or courts might object to all this is not considered.

Attempts to explain the causes of crime not only lead inevitably into the realm of the subjective and the familial, where both the efficacy and propriety of policy are most in doubt; they also lead one to a preference for the rehabilitative (or reformation) theory of corrections over the deterrence or incapacitation theories. Sutherland and Cressey recognize this: "On a formal level it may be observed that attempts to explain criminal behavior have greatly abetted at least the official use of the treatment reaction." One may deter a criminal by increasing the costs or reducing the benefits of crime, but that strategy does not deal with the "causes" of criminality, and hence does not go to the "root" of the problem. Stated another way, if causal theories explain why a criminal acts as he does, they also explain why he *must* act as he does and therefore they make any reliance on deterrence seem futile or irrelevant. Yet when Sutherland and Cressey come to consider the consequences of treating criminals in order to reform them, as opposed to punishing in order to deter them, they forthrightly admit that "there is no available proof" that treatment increased or decreased crime, and that "the methods of reformation . . . have not been notably successfuly in reducing crime rates." Careful reviews of the major efforts to rehabilitate criminals amply support this judgment.*

Policy analysis, as opposed to causal analysis, begins with a very different perspective. It asks, not what is the cause of a problem, but what is the condition one wants to bring into being, what measure do we have that will tell us when that condition exists, and finally what policy tools does a government (in our case, a democratic and libertarian government) possess that might, when applied, produce at reasonable cost a desired alteration in the present condition or progress toward the desired condition? In this instance, the desired condition is a reduction in specified forms of crime. The government has at its disposal certain policy instruments—rather few, in fact—that it can use: it can redistribute money, create (or stimulate the creation of) jobs, hire persons who offer advice, hire persons who practice surveillance and detection, build detention facilities, illuminate public streets, alter (within a range) the price of drugs and alcohol, require citizens to install alarm systems, and so forth. It can, in short, manage to a degree money, prices, and technology, and it can hire people who can provide within limits either simple (e.g., custodial) or complex (e.g., counseling) services. These tools, if employed, can affect the risks of crime, the benefits of noncriminal occupations, the accessibility of things worth stealing, and the mental state of criminals or would-be criminals. A policy analyst would ask what feasible changes in which of these areas would, at what cost (monetary and nonmonetary), produce how much of a change in the rate of a given crime. He would suspect, from his experience in education and social services, that changing the mental state of citizens is very difficult, quite costly, hard to manage organizationally, and may produce many unanticipated side-effects. He would then entertain as a working hypothesis that, given what he has to work with, he may gain more by altering risks, benefits, alternatives, and accessibility. He would not be sure of this, however, and would want to analyze carefully how these factors are related to existing differences in crime by state or city, and then would want to try some experimental alterations in these factors before committing himself to them wholesale.

In sum, the criminologist, concerned with causal explanations and part of a discipline—sociology—which assumes that social processes determine behavior, has operated by and large within an intellectual framework that makes it difficult or impossible to develop reasonable policy alternatives and has cast doubt, by assumption more than by argument or evidence, on the efficacy of those policy tools, necessarily dealing with objective rather than subjective conditions, which society might use to alter crime rates. A serious policy-oriented analysis of crime, by contrast, would place heavy emphasis on the manipulation of objective conditions, not necessarily because of a belief that the causes of crime are thereby being eradicated, but because behavior is easier to change than attitudes, and because the only instruments society has for altering behavior in the short run require it to assume that people act in response to the costs and benefits of alternative courses of action. The criminologist assumes, probably rightly, that the causes of crime are determined by attitudes which in turn are socially derived, if not determined; the policy analyst is led to assume that the criminal acts *as if* crime were the product of a free choice among competing opportunities and constraints. The radical individualism of Bentham and Beccaria may be scientifically questionable, but it is prudentially necessary.

The other most important work of the 1960's in the field of criminology, *Delinquency and Opportunity* by Richard A. Cloward and Lloyd E.

* See, for example, Leslie T. Wilkins, *Evaluations of Penal Measures* (Random House, 1969), and Robert Martinson, "What Works? Questions and Answers About the Rehabilitation of Prisoners" (*Public Interest*, Spring 1974).

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Ohlin, would appear to be an exception to the general criminological perspective of the day. Writing in 1960, Cloward and Ohlin developed an influential theory of delinquency in big cities. A delinquent gang (or "subculture"—the terms are used, for reasons not made clear, interchangeably) arises in response to the conflict that exists between socially-approved goals (primarily monetary success) and socially-approved means to realize those goals. Certain youths, notably of the lower class, desire conventional ends but discover that there are no legitimate means to attain them; being unable (unwilling?) to revise these expectations downward, they experience frustration and this may lead them to explore illegitimate ("nonconforming") alternatives. Some lower-class youth may aspire to middle-class values ("money and morality," as the authors put it) while others may aspire only to success in lower-class terms (money alone). The barriers to realizing those aspirations are found in part in cultural constraints derived from the immigrant experience (Southern Italians and Sicilians, for example, allegedly do not value schooling highly), but in larger part in structural difficulties, chiefly the fact that education is costly in money outlays and foregone earnings.

In its brief form, the theory of Cloward and Ohlin would seem to be in sharp contrast to the general sociological perspective. Delinquency may in their view be learned from peers, but it is learned because of the gap between aspirations and opportunities, and opportunities in turn are objective conditions determined by government and the social system. Education, they claim, is the chief source of opportunity. One therefore expects them to end their book with a call for cheaper, more readily available educational programs. But they do not. Indeed, less than one page is devoted to policy proposals, amounting essentially to one suggestion: "The major effort of those who wish to eliminate delinquency should be directed to the reorganization of slum communities." No explanation is offered of what "slum reorganization" might be, except for several pages that decry "slum disorganization." Their analysis leads the reader toward the material desires of life as the key factor (indeed, that is all the lower classes are supposed to value), but stops short of telling us how those material desires are to be realized. Their theory states that "each individual occupies a position in both legitimate and illegitimate opportunity structures" (they rightly note that this is a "new way" of viewing the problem), but they do not speak of the costs and benefits of illegitimate as opposed to legitimate opportunities. Instead, the individual who is confronted with a choice among kinds of opportunities does not *choose*, he "learns deviant values" from the "social structure of the slum."

Thus, when the authors come to speak of policy, they have little to say about what determines the choice of illegitimate opportunities (nobody has chosen anything, he has only "learned" or "assimilated"), and thus they have no theoretical grounds for suggesting that the value of legitimate "opportunities" should be increased (e.g., better-paying jobs for slum youth), or that the benefits of illegitimate ones should be decreased (e.g., more certain penalties for crime), or that "opportunities" for goal gratification be replaced by direct goal gratification (e.g., redistributing income).

III

EXPLAINING human behavior is a worthwhile endeavor; indeed, for intellectuals it is among the most worthwhile. Those who search for such explanations need not justify their activity by its social utility or its policy implications. Unfortunately, neither intellectuals nor policymakers always understand this. If the government becomes alarmed about crime, it assumes that those who have studied crime most deeply can contribute most fully to its solution. Criminologists have rarely sought to show statesmen the error of this assumption. Much of their writing is "practical," much of their time is "applied." To a degree, of course, criminological knowledge may assist criminologists' actions: careful study and conscientious learning can help one avoid obvious errors, attack popular myths, and devise inventive proposals. But it is also likely that the most profound understanding may impede or even distort, rather than facilitate, choice, because much of this knowledge is of what is immutable and necessary, not of what is variable or contingent.

In the mid-1960's, when the federal government turned toward social scientists for help in understanding and dealing with crime, there was not then in being a body of tested or even well-accepted theories as to how crime might be prevented or criminals reformed, nor was there much agreement on the causes of crime except that they were *social*, not psychological, biological, or individualistic. In fact, there was not even much agreement that crime was a major and growing problem—scholars noted the apparent increase in crime rates, but (properly) criticized the statistical and empirical weaknesses in these published rates. While these weaknesses did not always lead the critics to conclude that crime was in fact not increasing, some scholars did draw that conclusion tentatively and their criticisms encouraged others to draw it conclusively.

Nor were scholars very farsighted. Having established beyond doubt that crime rates were strongly related to age differences, few scholars (*none* that I can recall) noted the ominous consequences for crime of the coming-of-age in the 1960's of the products of the postwar "baby boom." Similarly, while some scholars had shown

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by cross-sectional studies that the proportion of a city's population that was nonwhite was powerfully correlated with assaultive crimes, few to my knowledge drew the obvious implication that, unless this correlation was spurious, the continued in-migration of blacks to large cities would inflate crime rates. Once the various national commissions were underway, however, scholars associated with them (notably the group associated with the Task Force on the Assessment of Crime, under the direction of Lloyd Ohlin) began to work vigorously on these issues and produced a number of reports that showed vividly the impact of demographic changes on crime rates.

The major intellectual difficulty governing the relationship of social scientists to policymakers with respect to crime was not the presence or absence of foresight, however, but rather the problem of how to arrive at policy proposals in the absence of scientific knowledge that would support them. The crime commission did not develop new knowledge as to crime prevention or control; as Professor Ohlin later described it, existing "social-science concepts, theories, and general perspectives were probably of greater utility to the staff and the commission in forming the final recommendations than the inputs from new knowledge development efforts." What were these "concepts, theories, and general perspectives"? One, cited by Ohlin, consisted of "grave doubts" about the effectiveness of the criminal-justice system and of rehabilitation and treatment programs. From this, Ohlin and his colleagues drew the conclusion that "the criminal-justice system should be used only as a last resort in the control of undesirable conduct." From that inference, in turn, the commission adopted the view that offenders should be "diverted" from the system and recommended a broad policy of "deprisonization."

There are no doubt ample grounds in humane sentiment for finding fault with prisons, but at the time of the commission's work there were scarcely any well-established *scientific* grounds. That "treatment" had failed seemed clear, but "non-treatment" had failed just as clearly: persons on probation might be no more likely to "recidivate" than those in prison, but neither were they much less likely. As for deterrence, there was, when the commission deliberated and Professor Ohlin advised, virtually *no* scientific material on whether prison did or did not deter. It was not until 1966, fifty years after criminology began as a discipline in this country and after seven editions of the leading text on crime had appeared, that there began to be a serious and sustained inquiry into the consequences for crime rates of differences in the certainty and severity of penalties. In any case, the commission scarcely dealt with the deterrence or incapacitation functions of prison.

In short, criminology could not form the basis for much policy advice to the commission. Yet that did not prevent criminologists from advising. Professor Ohlin is entirely honest about this: "The relevant social-science literature was descriptive and analytical. There were relatively few experimental or controlled studies of the effectiveness of particular programs or policies. . . . Sociologists serving as consultants to the commission proved reluctant to draw out . . . action recommendations. . . . When they did try to do this, the recommendations were often *more influenced by personal ideological convictions than by appropriately organized facts and theories . . .*" [emphasis added].

Social scientists did not carry the day on the commission (they could not, for example, get their view on marijuana accepted), but the effect of their advice, based on personal belief rather than scholarly knowledge, was clear. Working with sympathetic commission members in small task forces, the advisers stimulated and participated in a process that—as Professor Ohlin later put it—"led to far more liberal recommendations by the commission than one would have thought possible at the outset given the conservative cast of its membership."

There is nothing whatsoever wrong with social scientists trying to persuade others of their policy beliefs, just as there is nothing wrong with lay commission members trying to persuade sociologists of their beliefs. There *is* something wrong with a process of persuasion colored by the mistaken notion that one party is an "expert" whose views are entitled to special consideration because of their evidentiary quality. There is no way of knowing to what extent commission members believed what the sociologists were saying was true, as opposed to merely plausible or interesting. But based on my own experience in advising national commissions, including the crime commission, I am confident that few social scientists made careful distinctions, when the chips were down, between what they knew as scholars and what they believed as citizens, or even spent much time discussing the complex relationships between knowledge and belief. I certainly did not, and I do not recall others doing so.

IV

HAVING alluded to my own role as a policy adviser, let me amplify on that experience to reinforce, by self-criticism, the point I am making. I was not in 1966 a criminologist, nor am I now. I came to crime, if I may put it that way, as a consequence of my study of police administration and its political context, and found myself labeled an "expert" on crime because of that interest and perhaps also because of the desire of governmental consumers of "expertise" to inflate, by wishful thinking, the sup-

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ply of such persons to equal the demand for their services.

Once I found myself, willy-nilly, in the crime business, I found that my ideas on the subject—apart from those formed by my own empirical research on policing—were inevitably influenced by the currents of academic opinion about me. The effect of these currents is not to persuade one of what is true, but to persuade one of what is important. In my case, I did not absorb from criminological writings a set of policy conclusions about whether criminals can be deterred or rehabilitated, but I did absorb a set of interesting facts about crime: for example, that crimes are age-specific, that victims contribute to their victimization in most assaultive crimes, and that published crime rates are unreliable. All of these things were (and are) true, but of course they are not directly related to the policy question of what is to be done about crime.

In short, I did not, any more than Professor Ohlin, have in 1966-68 empirically supported policy advice to offer statesmen dealing with crime. What I then realized, as did Professor Ohlin, was that many of those seated about me, urging in the strongest tones various "solutions" to crime, were speaking out of ideology, not scholarship. Nor was this only true of my colleagues on the crime commission. Walter Reckless, for example, in the 1967 edition of his text, *The Crime Problem,* states flatly that punishment "does not . . . prevent crime," though he adduces no systematic evidence to warrant such a conclusion. Charles R. Tittle and Charles H. Logan provide other examples of this unsupported assertion in their review of the more recent literature on deterrence, a review that nevertheless concludes by observing that "almost all research since 1960 supports the view that negative sanctions are significant variables in the explanation of conformity and deviance. . . . Sanctions apparently have some deterrent effect under some circumstances."

What I only later realized was that criminologists, and perhaps sociologists in general, are part of an intellectual tradition whose focal concerns are with those aspects of society that are, to a great extent, beyond the reach of policy and even beyond the reach of science. Those matters that are within the reach of policy have been, at least for many criminologists, defined away as uninteresting because they were superficial, "symptomatic," or not of "causal" significance. Sociology, for all its claims to understand structure, is at heart a profoundly subjectivist discipline. When those who practice it are brought forward and asked for advice, they will say either (if conservative) that nothing is possible, or (if liberal) that everything is possible. That most sociologists are liberals explains why the latter reaction is more common even though the presuppositions of their own discipline would more naturally lead to the former.

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Voices of Orthodoxy

David Singer

FOR as long as one can remember, Orthodoxy has been regarded as the poor relation of American Judaism, a sectarian minority pursuing its own parochial concerns, less numerous, less affluent, altogether less "popular" than its Reform and Conservative counterparts. But all this is now changing. Orthodoxy is definitely emerging from the doldrums, evincing a new vitality and gaining new adherents. Indeed, Orthodoxy is finding itself a serious claimant for the loyalties of American Jews, many of whom in another time would certainly have turned elsewhere.

How is one to account for the phenomenon? Part of the reason, no doubt, can be ascribed to the general climate of American culture which, over the past decades, has included such features as the religious revival of the 1950's, the fascination with mysticism and the occult of the 60's, and the resurgence of ethnic consciousness of the early 70's. These developments helped to give Orthodox Judaism a certain legitimacy, an aura of glamor and authenticity lacking in other Jewish religious expressions which, by the emerging standards of the times, seemed to many to be hopelessly middle-class and bland. Within the Jewish community itself, Orthodoxy has been the beneficiary of a growing Jewish pride and assertiveness (stimulated in large part by the existence of the state of Israel), as well as the concomitant preoccupation with the problems of assimilation and intermarriage.

But when all is said and done, the Orthodox revival must ultimately be attributed to the sheer determination of groups of committed Orthodox Jews, whose fierce loyalty to traditional Jewish religious teaching, and whose unstinting efforts to establish and maintain Orthodox institutions, have made it possible for Orthodoxy to take root and flourish in the United States. Nor have heightened acculturation and raised socioeconomic status—blessings which Orthodox Jews have come to share with the rest of American Jewry, but which have also been known to dilute religious commitment—succeeded in diminishing Orthodox élan. On the contrary, Orthodox Jews, more prosperous than ever before and participating more freely in the general society, are at the same time more passionate in their affirmations.

The number of committed Orthodox Jews in America—those who strive to conduct their lives within the total framework of Jewish religious law—is estimated at approximately 200,000. If to this figure we add the nominally Orthodox—all those who belong to one or another of the 1,600 Orthodox synagogues in the U.S.—the total would be much larger.* The Orthodox renaissance, however, is discernible not so much at the numerical as at the institutional level. Orthodox day schools, which combine intensive Jewish instruction with general studies, today number more than 350. Many of these schools are located in affluent suburban areas, where they complement new Orthodox congregations, housed in imposing structures indistinguishable in appearance from the local Reform temple or Conservative synagogue. Increased prosperity and greater acculturation have also spurred the development of a full-fledged service industry catering to Orthodox needs and tastes. Today, Orthodox Jews can vacation, if they so choose, at resorts in northern New England or the Caribbean which combine all the usual luxury features with a scrupulous adherence to Jewish ritual law. Or, less grandly, they can enjoy the amenities offered by the fast-growing chain of Kosher King restaurants, the "first kosher drive-ins in America": Orthodoxy's answer to McDonald's and Colonel Sanders.

Orthodoxy's new popularity also extends to the campus, where the movement has become something of an "in" thing among Jewish college students. Here, as at Kosher King, one does not have

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* The distinction between "committed" and "nominal" Orthodoxy is more fully developed in the excellent monograph by Charles S. Liebman, "Orthodoxy in American Jewish Life" (*American Jewish Year Book,* 1965, pp. 21-98). Other studies on the subject by Liebman are: "Orthodoxy in Nineteenth-Century America" (*Tradition,* Spring 1964); "A Sociological Analysis of Contemporary Orthodoxy" (*Judaism,* Summer 1964); "Left and Right in American Orthodoxy" (*Judaism,* Winter 1966); and "The Orthodox Left: A Reply" (*Conservative Judaism,* Winter 1966).

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to be Orthodox to indulge. Orthodox and non-Orthodox young people alike take part in the programs of the "Chabad Houses," centers run by the Lubavitcher Hasidim on major campuses across the country. Similarly, every year thousands of non-Orthodox students converge on the Brooklyn headquarters of the Lubavitcher movement to join in weekend "Encounters with Chabad."* The same students also flock to appearances of such visiting hip-hasidic "superstars" as Shlomo Carlebach and Zalman Schachter, and participate in the activities of Yavneh, the Orthodox college-youth organization. Altogether, Orthodoxy has become a highly visible presence on American campuses, including Ivy League institutions.

Finally, Orthodoxy has come to be valued by certain Jewish intellectuals who in years gone by would have been totally indifferent to the movement, if not downright antagonistic. At a recent conference of American and Israeli scholars and writers, Irving Kristol found occasion to note:

> I am not Orthodox—but I think that Orthodoxy is the most important segment of Judaism. It is the one segment that survives all ideologies. . . . Survival happens to be its strength. It has many weaknesses, I know, but that fanatical adherence to the Orthodox way of life is what permits it to survive. . . . Therefore, I think it behooves all Jews to pay a certain special attention both to Orthodoxy and to what I would call neo-Orthodoxy.†

This view is shared by other intellectuals for whom tradition is a virtue and the past a cherished entity; they too commend Orthodoxy for its unswerving attachment to age-old, particularist norms—a tenacity which characterizes the hasidic community no more than it does the new breed of Orthodox modernists who teach at Harvard, contribute to the *New Republic,* or serve in the New York City administration.

II

It is one thing to be aware of Orthodox survival and achievement, quite another to understand the particulars of Orthodox life and thought and the varieties of Orthodox expression. The thought-patterns and value-systems to be found in the Orthodox world differ radically from those generally encountered in American Jewish life, let alone in the general American society. In order to penetrate the arcana of the Orthodox subculture, moreover, one must begin by setting aside a number of prevalent misconceptions.

It is the conventional wisdom that Orthodoxy is synonymous with the old rather than the new in Jewish life. This notion has its source in Orthodox Judaism's claim to being a direct continuation of the classical Jewish tradition which originated with the theophany at Mount Sinai. Yet in fact Orthodoxy as it is generally understood today is of rather recent vintage. Historically considered, Orthodox Judaism is a *modern* religious ideology, which sprang up in the early 19th century as a response to the crisis in Jewish life engendered by the Emancipation, and especially to the Reform movement. Indeed, it was the Reformers who introduced the term "Orthodox" into Jewish discourse (in 1808), employing it as an epithet—in the sense of "rigid"—against their traditionalist foes.

The traditionalists had taken it for granted, as had all Jews for countless generations, that there was but one definition of a Jew, namely, a member of the community of believers who upheld the full authority of God's Written and Oral Law. (In the absence of a religiously neutral alternative, the only other "choice" for a person born into this community was to convert to Christianity or Islam.) Only when this definition came under challenge by Reformers, who held it inadequate to the needs of a people aspiring to full integration into enlightened European society, did traditionalists accept the fact of a division within Jewry and proclaim themselves irrevocably on one side of it. Thus, Orthodoxy was a product of the same historical forces that gave rise to all the modern Jewish ideologies, religious and secular, including Reform and Conservatism and, at a somewhat later date, Zionism and even Jewish political radicalism.

A latecomer on the European Jewish scene, Orthodoxy made an even later appearance in America. While the popular conception holds otherwise—most American Jews take it for granted that the bulk of the East European immigration to the U.S. in the period 1880-1914 was Orthodox—the fact is that the overwhelming majority of the immigrants were not observant Jews. In the first place, those Jews who emigrated from Eastern Europe did so in the face of strong opposition from rabbinic authorities who regarded America as an impure land. Secondly, the East European immigrants made little effort to establish in America those institutions basic to the maintenance of an Orthodox community. To be sure, synagogues proliferated on New York's Lower East Side, but their very multiplicity, far exceeding the numbers necessary for purposes of worship, indicates that their main function was social rather than religious. On the other hand, *mikvaot* (ritual baths), which in Jewish religious law take precedence over synagogues, were virtually nonexistent. The same was true of day schools. By 1915, when approximately three million Jews had arrived in the U.S. from Eastern

* Chabad, one of the synonyms for the Lubavitcher movement, is an acronym formed from the first letters, in Hebrew, of the Lubavitch philosophy: *chochma* (wisdom), *bina* (understanding), and *daat* (knowledge).

† "Tenth Annual American-Israel Dialogue" (*Congress Bi-Weekly,* April 13, 1973).

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Europe, there were only two such schools in the entire country.

Surprising as it may seem, Orthodoxy did not begin to play an important role in American Jewish life until the period of World War II, when large numbers of Orthodox Jews came to the United States as refugees from Nazism. Confirmed traditionalists, they would have gladly remained where they were had not fate decreed otherwise. Now they were determined to recreate in America the patterns of religious life which they had maintained in the Old World. Among the Orthodox refugees were the followers of such hasidic eminences as the *rebbes* of Lubavitch, Satmar, Klausenberg, Wischnitz, etc. An even more important element was the Jews whose spiritual world was that of the great East European *yeshivot* (academies for advanced talmudic study). It was they who, under the leadership of the late Rabbi Aharon Kotler, laid the foundations for the Orthodox renaissance by establishing a network of day schools, *yeshivot*, and other religious institutions.

If the history of Orthodoxy in the United States is often misunderstood, the sociological dimensions of Orthodox Jewish life simply escape most observers. Thus, it is generally assumed that the many divisions within Orthodoxy stem from the fact that one group is "more religious" than another. This is not so. There are, of course, significant differences in patterns of ritual observance among the various Orthodox constituencies (the unique practices of the Hasidim are the most obvious case in point), but these differences are the result, in the main, of variant religious customs. As for the *halakhah* (Jewish religious law), all Orthodox groups accept the totality of the Written and Oral Law as binding. There is also near unanimity among Orthodox groups on theological issues, including the vital question of revelation.

The actual divisions within Orthodoxy, as Charles Liebman has argued, reflect a church-sect dichotomy that is familiar to sociologists of religion. The church wing of Orthodoxy consists of the "modern Orthodox," while the sectarian wing is made up of the followers of the various heads of *yeshivot* and the Hasidim. To see what this division implies in specific terms, we may examine the pages of two journals, *Tradition* and the *Jewish Observer*, the key publications, respectively, of the modern Orthodox and the sectarians.

III

Modern Orthodoxy evinces two dominant characteristics: an abiding concern with demonstrating the relevance of the *halakhah* for contemporary life, and a strong emphasis on the interconnectedness of all Jews. Nowhere are these traits more in evidence than in the pages of *Tradition*, the quarterly journal published by the Rabbinical Council of America. This organization is closely linked to Yeshiva University, the leading modern Orthodox institution—most of its members are graduates of the school, and the Yeshiva motto, "Torah and Science," serves as the intellectual ideal of *Tradition* as well. And just as the Rabbinical Council participates in joint activities with Conservative and Reform bodies, so *Tradition* is the one Orthodox journal to open its pages on occasion to non-Orthodox contributors. To many Orthodox Jews, *Tradition*'s ecumenical outlook and its stress on relevance appear highly suspect, if not a transgression; but what is unacceptable to the sectarians seems quite appropriate to their modern Orthodox brethren.

The intellectual godfather of modern Orthodoxy is Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808-88), the founder of German-Jewish "neo-Orthodoxy." Appropriately enough, he is given his due in the pages of *Tradition*; scarcely an issue appears that does not somewhere invoke his name. Hirsch, who was an early witness to the challenge posed to Judaism by the Emancipation, firmly believed that Jews did not have to choose between a commitment to the Jewish tradition and modernity. On the contrary, he argued that classical Judaism itself mandated a creative synthesis between Torah and secular knowledge (*Torah im derekh eretz*). Hirsch's view is fully shared by *Tradition*; the magazine's first issue (Fall 1958) carried a Foreword (by the then president of the Rabbinical Council of America) stating that the purpose of the journal would be "to discuss, interpret, and illustrate the basic tenets of Judaism in such a way as to meet the doubts of the modern mind and strengthen the faith of modern man" and to serve as a forum for "a fusion between traditional and modern thought and experience."

The style of *Tradition* is essentially that of any academic or scholarly journal. It is serious, learned, heavily footnoted, occasionally ponderous, and gives off an air of authority. In quest of its particular brand of relevance the journal has, over the years, published many impressive papers dealing with legal and theological issues, which have also served to illuminate various aspects of Jewish thought. Among these are: "The Experience of Repentance: The Views of Maimonides and William James," by Howard I. Levine (Fall 1958); "Pluralism and the Halakhah," by Walter S. Wurzburger (Spring 1962); "An Integrated Jewish World View," by Eliezer Berkovits (Fall 1962); "Some Aspects of the Jewish Attitude Toward the Welfare State," by Isadore Twersky (Spring 1963); "The Lonely Man of Faith," by Joseph B. Soloveitchik* (Summer 1965); and "Faith and Doubt," by Norman Lamm (Spring

* Rabbi Soloveitchik, one of the leading talmudic scholars in the world, is the acknowledged spiritual-intellectual leader of modern Orthodoxy.

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1967). And, as might be expected of a scholarly journal, *Tradition* has become a repository for historical studies probing such matters as "Philo-Semitism among Ancient Intellectuals," "Government in Biblical Israel," and "Maimonides' Attitude Toward Sacrifices." Another regular *Tradition* offering is critiques of religious developments in the broader Jewish community, a staple of Orthodox journalism; but whereas elsewhere such pieces tend to be shrill and overly polemical, in *Tradition* they are usually sober and polite in tone. A typical example is "Arrogance or Humility in Prayer," by Emanuel Rackman (Fall 1958), which argues against Reform and Reconstructionist efforts to revise the traditional prayerbook.

TRADITION's most popular feature, indeed the journal's showpiece, is the department, "Review of Recent Halakhic Periodical Literature," which was conducted for many years and with great distinction by Immanuel Jakobovits, now Chief Rabbi of Great Britain. The "Review" reports and comments on responsa —rabbinic replies to queries on matters of Jewish law—handed down by noted present-day Orthodox authorities and originally published in various Hebrew sources; it has come to function as a kind of information service for Orthodox Jews as to what is and is not permissible, in addition to demonstrating to non-Orthodox Jews that the *halakhah* is a flexible instrument capable of responding to any and all contemporary problems. Among the issues which the "Review" has treated are: the right to strike, workman's compensation, gambling in the synagogue, the use of microphones and automatic elevators on the Sabbath, *bat mitzvah* celebrations, oral contraceptives, corneal transplants, medical experiments on animals, even space travel.*

Sometimes the problem at hand seems less than crucial, at least to the uninitiated or uncommitted; for instance: "Is it permitted to play 'Scrabble' on the Sabbath?" (The answer, after copious citation of rulings in apposite cases, concludes that "the mere formation of loose letters into words does not in itself constitute a prohibited act of writing according to most authorities. . . . Nevertheless, if one usually writes down scores to find out who is the winner, 'Scrabble' would be forbidden on the Sabbath, like any other game requiring writing on weekdays. . . .") Often, however, the issue under consideration is literally a matter of life and death: for example, whether or not abortion is permitted in the case of a thalidomide pregnancy. The discussion of this particular question is worth quoting in some detail both for its intrinsic interest and for its demonstration of *halakhic* method:

> The only legitimate indication for an abortion [of a thalidomide baby] . . . is a threat to the safety of the mother, based on the explicit directive of the *Mishnah* (*Obelot,* 7:6) in favor of an embryotomy when there is no other way to save the mother's life. Such a contingency includes psychological as well as physical hazards, provided they are of a genuinely grave nature. Thus, a 17th-century responsum permitted an abortion in a case where it is feared the mother would otherwise suffer an attack of hysteria imperiling her life (Israel Meir Mizrachi, *Peri Ha-Aretz, Yoreh De'ah,* no. 21), just as a mental patient who may endanger his life by suicidal tendencies is considered just like any other dangerously sick person (I. J. Unterman in *Ha-Torah Veha-Medinah,* vol. IV, pp. 25, 29).
>
> On the strength of these rulings . . . the following conclusions appear warranted . . . 1. A physically or mentally abnormal child, whether before or after birth, has the same claim to life as a normal child. 2. While only the killing of a born (and viable) child constitutes murder in Jewish law, the destruction of the foetus too is a crime and cannot be justified except out of consideration for the mother's life.

Tradition, as noted, is committed to the view that Orthodox Jews, for the sake of Jewish unity, should cooperate on a formal basis with Conservative, Reform, and secular Jews even when the latter are not prepared to accept Orthodoxy's theological and *halakhic* claims. To Orthodox sectarians, as we shall see, such a position is anathema, implying a recognition and legitimation of heretical beliefs. *Tradition* rejects this argument on the grounds that cooperation does not imply sanction; that Conservative and Reform rabbis are no longer hostile to Orthodoxy; and that uncivil behavior will only serve further to alienate the masses of Jews from the classical Jewish tradition.† Similarly, with reference to Israel, *Tradition* takes it for granted that the National Religious party may serve in a government coalition composed in the main of secular political groupings.

For all its openness to non-Orthodox views and to contemporary intellectual currents, however, *Tradition* has failed in what should have become one of its most important functions, namely, being a serious vehicle for Orthodox self-criticism. The journal has not hesitated to advert to shortcomings in the general Jewish community, often with great cogency, but with only occasional exceptions it has shied away from casting a critical eye on issues directly affecting the Orthodox community, such as the position and role of women, the effectiveness of day-school and yeshiva education, etc. This inhibition can be ascribed to the fact that *Tradition,* in addition to everything else,

* A comprehensive sampling of material from the "Review of Recent Halakhic Periodical Literature" has been collected in the volume, *Jewish Law Faces Modern Problems,* edited by Immanuel Jakobovits (Yeshiva University Press, 1965).

† See, for example, "Does Participation Imply Recognition?," by Shubert Spero (*Tradition,* Winter 1966).

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is also an organizational journal and as such must take pains not to ruffle its constituency unduly. A more fundamental reason, perhaps, is the fact that *Tradition* is forever being scrutinized and criticized by the Orthodox sectarians, whom it also has no wish to offend.

IV

SECTARIAN ORTHODOXY, as distinguished from modern Orthodoxy, is marked by an emphasis on authority and separatism. These characteristics are most prominently associated with the Hasidim, who look to a *rebbe* for guidance, and who employ special dress, language, and self-ghettoization to isolate themselves from what they consider the contaminations of both the general Jewish and American societies.* But precisely because the Hasidim, with the exception of the Lubavitcher, totally reject the modern experience, they provide a less interesting example of Orthodox sectarianism than an organization like Agudath Israel of America (or the "Agudah," as it is known), which combines an unswerving attachment to the traditional world of the East European *yeshivot* with a bow to the exigencies of Western culture.† This "dualism," if one may call it that, is seen to best effect in the organization's monthly magazine, the *Jewish Observer*. In style and content, the *Jewish Observer* is the very model of a publication representing a "Torah-true Judaism" that is implacably opposed to all deviations. Yet the very fact that the Agudah has seen fit to publish a magazine in English—its more natural tongue is Yiddish—is an indication of its awareness of the challenges which threaten the "Torah-true" way of life and of its willingness to deal with the matter.

The tone and posture of the magazine were forthrightly established with the very first issue (September 1963), which carried a statement of purpose that served as both battle cry and credo:

> . . . [T]he temper of [our] Orthodoxy is not subject to expediency. [We] view Judaism's standards, its dictates, and its norms as objective . . . [We] do not seek to make the Torah's values conform to our thinking and doing. When [we] seek to define those values we do so either by reference to the written legacy of the Sages of Torah of all ages, or by addressing [our] inquiries to the living repositories of Torah, to the great Torah scholars of the age.

An Orthodoxy of such uncompromising dimensions, the statement conceded, was not likely to be popular with the masses of American Jews, but the *Jewish Observer* and the "camp of Torah" for whom it would speak were fully prepared to "remain in the minority, and to entrust to the God of Israel the vindication of His Torah." What they were not prepared to do was to cooperate with "Jewish organizations or agencies whose fundamental life-principle is not that of Torah." Finally, the *Jewish Observer* promised its readers it would take up their fight with "passion and zeal," not with the "bland, bloodless, '*pareve*' Anglo-Saxon restraint which has become the hallmark of American Jewish discussion."

When the *Jewish Observer* speaks of Orthodox authority reposing with the "great Torah scholars of the age," it has in mind a group of men in a specific institutional setting. These are the *gedolim* (masters of Jewish tradition) who serve on the Agudah's supreme ruling body, the Council of Torah Authorities. The *Jewish Observer* does not claim that the council has an exclusive monopoly on *gedolim*, but it rightfully insists that the council members—who include such prominent heads of *yeshivot* as Rabbi Moses Feinstein, probably the leading contemporary expert in applied *halakhah*, Rabbi Jacob Kamenetzky, and Rabbi Isaac Hutner (all of New York)—constitute the single most distinguished group of recognized Torah sages in the world today. Given this eminence, it is hardly surprising that the *Jewish Observer* should demand acceptance of the council's decisions on all matters affecting Jewish life, not only ritual issues but also such social and political questions as government aid to private schools, military service for women in Israel, and strategies for aiding Soviet Jewry.

The influence of the *gedolim* is particularly evident in the *Jewish Observer*'s attitude toward secular culture and college education. Since these had no place in the East European yeshiva ethos which the *gedolim* idealize and seek to perpetuate, they must, according to Agudah philosophy, be approached with the utmost wariness. Such articles in the *Jewish Observer* as "The Yeshiva World's Outlook on Torah and Secular Studies" by Menachem Greenberg (December 1969), "The Orthodox Student on the College Campus" by Yaakov Jacobs (March 1969), and "The Yeshiva *Bochur* and College" by Bernard Weinberger (March 1966) make it clear that Orthodox Jews are best advised to devote themselves exclusively to the study of classical Jewish religious sources. The magazine emphatically rejects the idea that there is a religious obligation to master secular culture, which it regards as merely the "background setting for Torah, the core and real content of Creation." The secular disciplines are dis-

* On the subject of the hasidic community in the U.S., see: *Williamsburg; A Jewish Community in Transition*, by George Kranzler (Philip Feldheim, 1961); *Hasidic Community of Williamsburg*, by Solomon Poll (Free Press, 1962); and *Satmar: An Island in the City*, by Israel Rubin (Quadrangle, 1972).

† Agudath Israel was founded in Europe in 1912 as an organization dedicated to "the solution of all problems facing the Jewish people, in the spirit of Torah." By the time of World War II, it had become the largest organized force within the Orthodox world. Prior to the establishment of the state of Israel, the organization opposed the aims of political Zionism. It continues to reject totally any form of secular Zionist ideology.

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missed as "non-Torah" and are in no way to be equated with the "Written and Oral Law given at Sinai [which has] eternal, inherent, [and] ultimate holiness." It is taken for granted that much of secular culture is a form of heresy, and a college education, for anything other than strictly vocational purposes, is strongly opposed.

The impact of the *gedolim* is felt in other ways too in the *Jewish Observer*. In indicating the credentials of its contributors, for instance, the journal places much greater stress on the yeshiva an individual attended than on his secular education. Likewise, the magazine is careful to pepper its articles with Hebrew words while retaining the Yiddishized Ashkenazic pronunciation of Eastern Europe (*shabbos* instead of Sabbath, *mitzvos* instead of commandments, etc.). The *Jewish Observer* prefers the term *Yiddishkeit* to Jewishness, and *Ribono Shel Olam* (Master of the World) or *Hashem Yisborach* (He Whose Name is to be Praised) to God; if the word God is used, deference to traditional pietism dictates the spelling "G-d." Finally, it is to be noted that almost every issue of the magazine contains a hagiographical sketch of an East European Torah sage.

The *Jewish Observer*'s quintessential activity, undoubtedly, is its ongoing polemic against all those in Jewish life, at home and abroad, who do not conform to its standard of "Torah-true" Judaism. Among the chief targets are the Israeli government (charged, among other things, with desecrating the Sabbath, redefining Jewishness, tolerating Christian missionaries, championing secularism, and authorizing forced autopsies), the American Jewish defense agencies (for opposing government aid to parochial schools), and Conservative and Reform rabbis (who are considered promoters of sin and the vanguard of assimilation). But the sharpest barbs are reserved for the spokesmen of modern Orthodoxy, at whom, it sometimes seems, the bulk of the *Jewish Observer*'s "passion and zeal" is directed. They are recurrently excoriated for their positive evaluation of secular culture, their belief in the desirability of higher education, their Zionism, their general stress on making Judaism relevant to modernity, but, above all, for their sitting down together with Reform and Conservative rabbis in bodies like the Synagogue Council of America.

While the fierceness of the *Jewish Observer*'s polemics guarantees lively reading, it also underscores the magazine's essential weakness, its unrelieved negativism. Rather than articulating its own positive approach to issues, it is in most instances content merely to inveigh against positions adopted by others. But to say that something is not "Torah-true" is to define the problem rather than to offer a solution. Most of the articles, therefore, end precisely where they should begin. The magazine, in sum, has an abundance of spirit, but suffers from a failure of nerve.

V

THE TWO journals discussed so far, *Tradition* and the *Jewish Observer*, articulate the ideological differences which separate Orthodox modernists and Orthodox sectarians. It is important to note, however, that on the functional level, the two Orthodox constituencies have, in the last few years, drawn closer together. To a significant degree this is attributable to the Orthodox community's heightened political awareness, and to its aggressive pursuit of a number of social-policy goals. One such goal is the securing of government aid for Jewish day schools and *yeshivot*—an issue that was once a bone of contention among various Orthodox groups, but on which today all are united. Orthodox modernists and sectarians have also joined in an effort to obtain a share of anti-poverty funds, and to end employment discrimination against Orthodox Jews. Likewise, they have formed a common front to oppose the liberalization of laws relating to abortion and pornography. Finally, in several metropolitan centers the two Orthodox groups have worked together on the problem of neighborhood security and stability.

The growing functional alliance between Orthodox modernists and sectarians is reflected in the *Jewish Press*, a New York City-oriented weekly newspaper, specializing in sensationalist journalism, which has gained a large readership by providing a common platform for writers representing a wide variety of Orthodox commitments. Its most famous contributor is Meir Kahane, the controversial founder of the Jewish Defense League. Kahane's chief rival for attention is Marvin Schick, a one-time aide to former New York City Mayor John Lindsay, who has close ties to many of the leaders of sectarian Orthodoxy. Schick shares Kahane's emphasis on Jewish group interest as the pivot of Jewish political activity, but he takes a more moderate stand on specific issues, for example, Jewish-black relations. The *Jewish Press* also contains such regular features as Ben Greenberg's "Spotlight on Education," dealing with the politics of the New York City school system, and David Borac's "Exposing the Haters," which reports on the activities of various anti-Semitic groups. To cap things, there are columns by official spokesmen of the Agudath Israel and the modernist Religious Zionists. Quite appropriately, in view of developing Orthodox unity, the two columns appear side by side.

While shared social-policy interests have played a significant role in bringing Orthodox modernists and sectarians together on the functional level, an equally important factor in this regard has been the modernists' growing fear that American Jewry is a community headed for spiritual extinction, a victim of assimilation and intermarriage. As Charles Liebman has put it:

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> . . . We face the prospect of increasing Jewish indifference on the part of the vast majority of American Jews. . . . Increasingly, Judaism will retain the identification of only those whose commitment is a very deep one and those who are willing to pay the high cost of sacrificing age, occupational, or other group identities for their Judaism. It seems to me that this can occur only among those who believe that the source of their Jewish identity is transcendent and authoritative. They constitute only a small proportion of the Jewish community whose nucleus lies within Orthodoxy. . . . But from the majority of American Jews, perhaps most of those who are today affiliated with Reform and Conservative . . . synagogues, not to mention the Jewish Community Centers, there is no hope.

Given this bleak assessment of the future of the Jewish community, it is hardly surprising that the Orthodox modernists have sought to establish a *modus vivendi* with the Orthodox sectarians.

If the present trend toward cooperation between Orthodox modernists and sectarians proceeds apace, it can only bring a blessing to the Orthodox community, affording an opportunity for building upon the solid institutional foundations that have already been established. Moreover, while most American Jews, insofar as one can tell, will not rush to embrace Orthodoxy, it is still possible that the example of a vital Orthodox community might prod Conservative and Reform Jews to a greater degree of traditionalism in their beliefs and practices. On the other hand, the relationship that is evolving between the two wings of Orthodoxy may produce a very different consequence, the adoption on the part of the modernists of a narrower, more sectarian outlook. Only time will tell. Meanwhile, there is every reason to assume that the developments associated with the Orthodox renaissance will continue in force in the years to come.

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Coppola's Progress

William S. Pechter

The Conversation is Francis Ford Coppola's sixth film as a director, and something of a departure in a career which seems to grow not more but less easy to pin down. Beginning in 1962 with a low-budget horror film for Roger Corman (*Dementia 13,* a potboiler with some genuinely eerie effects), Coppola's films have included a prototypical with-it youth movie (*You're a Big Boy Now,* 1967), a big-budget musical (the 1968 *Finian's Rainbow,* which I haven't seen), an extremely fine but financially unsuccessful small film (*The Rain People,* 1969), and what remains, until *The Exorcist* overtakes it, the biggest money-maker in American movies in his 1972 *The Godfather*: all interspersed with work writing scripts for other directors (*Is Paris Burning?, Patton, The Great Gatsby*) that enabled him to survive as a director despite his not having had a popular success until *The Godfather* turned him into not only a force to be reckoned with in the industry but a veritable tycoon. (Interspersed also are his playing an avuncular role in the career of George Lucas, the director of *American Graffiti,* and a certain restless involvement in activities other than films: staging a work for the San Francisco Opera, directing a production of Noel Coward's *Private Lives,* creating a little-theater repertory company.) In prospect is Coppola's sequel to *The Godfather,* whose commercial success seems guaranteed (while, on the other hand, it appears his reputation will be less sullied than most by the critical debacle of *The Great Gatsby*); yet Coppola speaks dissatisfiedly of following his sequel to *The Godfather* with a period of retirement. And now there is *The Conversation.*

The Conversation begins, like *The Godfather* and *The Rain People* before it, splendidly. While the soundtrack provides an eerie accompaniment of intermittent electronic noises, an overhead shot very slowly zooms in on a bustling downtown San Francisco square to pick out, first, Harry Caul, the film's protagonist, and then, as they mingle with the crowd, a perfectly ordinary-looking man and woman whose conversation Harry is clandestinely recording. The couple's words pass in and out of audibility amid the general babble, and the conversation seems distinguished only for being so thoroughly unremarkable. Why, one wonders, is it being recorded? Can so formidably complicated an operation as the one required to record the couple's conversation in these circumstances (the project involves a disguised sound truck and numerous operatives stationed at various locations) have been initiated merely by a jealous husband? One of Harry's subordinates expresses curiosity about the import of the conversation they're taping, and Harry replies, "I don't want to know what they're talking about. All I want is a nice fat recording."

One's curiosity remains unsatisfied, however, not only about his mysterious assignment but about Harry Caul himself, the generally acknowledged (and presumably well-paid) "best bugger in the West" who nevertheless remains a shabby figure in an omnipresent plastic raincoat, secretively making his way from his recording studio to a comfortless apartment to furtive visits to a mistress in whom he confides little more than his name. (Told it's his birthday, she asks,

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"Does something special happen between us on your birthday? Something personal?") Oppressed by a multitude of petty guilts (in church, he confesses to impure thoughts and having stolen papers from an unattended newsstand), he nevertheless attempts to evade the guilt which dogs him for a multiple murder that stemmed from one of his bugging operations some years before. "I'm in no way responsible," he insists to the priest in the confessional, and later tells some colleagues, "It had nothing to do with me. I just turned in the tapes. What they do with the tapes is their own business."

But it's the horror of what's happened before that alerts him to the sinister implications of his present operation, and, when his retainer's underlings seem unusually intent on immediately obtaining the recording, Harry (who refuses to surrender the tape to anyone but their employer himself) begins to take a more active interest in what the conversation he has recorded might mean. During the course of an utterly engrossing sequence in which previously unintelligible fragments of speech on the tape are first isolated and then amplified, the words, "He'd kill us if he got the chance," become audible, and Harry finds his previous armor against involvement disintegrating around him. He attempts to intercede—first, by refusing to relinquish the tape, and then, when the tape is deviously got from him, by appealing to his client, whom he takes to be a betrayed husband, not to harm his wife. But Harry has misconstrued the words on the tape—the real meaning of what was said eludes him—and, in a final twist of the plot, a new horror of the very sort he's been refusing to acknowledge opens up to engulf him.

The Conversation is a disturbing film, both in ways it intends to be and for its peculiarly tangled web of flaws and virtues. What, perhaps, needs to be said first is how curiously remote this film about electronic surveillance seems from the Watergate world in which it now makes its "timely" appearance (the film was, in fact, conceived some eight years ago), and how little its wiretapper-protagonist resembles either a James McCord-like "good citizen" or one of that parade of bland organization men who so mesmerized us on television in days recently past. There *is*, however, something which *The Conversation* calls strongly to mind: not Watergate, but (as a number of people have by now observed) Antonioni's 1966 film, *Blow-Up*. Though this is most obvious in the actual "blow-up" (i.e., tape-deciphering) sequence itself, the resemblance extends from the painterly look of the film (some of the shots in Harry's apartment have an almost Vermeer-like quality of sculptured light) to such small details as the appearance of a mime in the opening sequence who seems to constitute a quite pointed reference to the mimes whose appearances bracket the action of the Antonioni film. Indeed, the resemblance extends even to the overall design of the two films: in both, a protagonist, through some means of mechanical reproduction, uncovers a mystery, and in both an ambiguous mystery-thriller plot is used to get at something beyond the thriller's conventions.

It's here, however, that the flaws of the Coppola film begin to reveal themselves. For whatever one may justly say about *Blow-Up*'s superficiality, in it, the mystery plot is perfectly geared to the film's meaning, and functions almost as a machine for the production of significant ambiguities on such themes as the relations between art and life, between artistic pursuit and social involvement, between photography and truth, etc., etc. That these ambiguities in *Blow-Up* may be sterile, the stuff of which academic papers are made, isn't the issue. Despite that, there *is* something intellectually satisfying about the apparent inexhaustibility of *Blow-Up*'s puzzle, about the ingenuity of its mechanism.

But this relation of plot to theme has gone askew in *The Conversation*. I'm not referring merely to minor implausibilities along the way, though it did bother me that someone as afflicted by paranoia as

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Harry (whose obsession with protecting his own privacy is in direct ratio to the extent of his violation of others') would invite some rival colleagues to visit his studio, or allow an object to be put in his pocket by one of them. Rather, it is the resolution of the mystery itself that seems to work against the movie. For it turns out, in the plot's final twist, that the conversation Harry records is taking place not between the potential victims of a murder but between its planners—and Harry's attempts at intercession fail to prevent it.

"I thought I was writing a film about privacy," Coppola has said, "but I was also making a film about responsibility." To the extent that *The Conversation* is a film about the invasion of privacy, a statement against bugging (and it is only partly this), it's one whose plot could be used (indeed, could more easily be used) to *justify* bugging, in that Harry's surveillance uncovers a plan to commit a murder which thus could conceivably have been prevented (unless one is to assume that the words on the tape, and, by implication, all words, are inherently unfathomable, an interpretation supportable by the action of the film, but, I think, fruitless, and unworthy of it). And to the extent that the film is about the taking of moral responsibility for one's actions (which it also is in part), it ends with Harry attempting for the first time to do just that, and failing; and, moreover, being, in effect, punished for attempting in a final too-easy irony of the bugger bugged, himself being spied on by those whose crime he has discovered. Perhaps because Coppola is on some level aware of these contradictions, the mystery plot is allowed to sputter out in a welter of ambiguities, not in the sense of *Blow-Up*'s but rather those of a *Marienbad*-like confusion of images which may or may not be real, some (or all) of which may exist, that is, only in Harry's imagination. (The effect is a bit like that of the conclusion of *Don't Look Now*, in which everything is thrown at you, and you are left to sort it out.) Ambiguity serves here not so much for resonance as for camouflage:

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to create a deliberate vagueness. And though the film ends almost as strikingly as it began (with Harry, in an image of almost surreal intensity, sitting in the rubble of the apartment he has methodically torn apart in a vain attempt to locate the bug concealed in it), its contradictions nonetheless survive it.

That vagueness which troubles *The Conversation* contrasts yet again with one of the virtues of *Blow-Up,* which is its concreteness, its sense of being rooted in a particular time and place; and though Antonioni's 60's-mod London may be very much a tourist's view, it's at least a high-class tourism that Antonioni gives us. Of course, apart from the opening scene in Union Square, Coppola really isn't interested in the particularities of any actual place; but what one misses is the particularity of the characters. Thus Harry's retainer is known only as "The Director," and is so remote an abstraction of a corporate chieftain that one virtually has to squint to see he's played by Robert Duvall (in an unbilled appearance). Coppola has said in an interview that the principals in the murder plot were kept deliberately sketchy for fear that Harry couldn't otherwise compete for an audience's interest with them; yet surely the way to hold an audience's interest in one's main character is not by suppressing interest in the others. And, for all that, there is something fundamentally vague about Harry, too. His portrait is compellingly drawn by both Coppola and Gene Hackman, in a remarkably subdued, self-effacing performance, and yet, despite such quirky touches as Harry's solitary improvisations on the saxophone and some snippets of background information (imparted in a misconceived dream sequence), we never really feel that we're getting to the bottom of him.

I MAY seem, then, to be saying *The Conversation* is a failure, and yet the wonder is, for all that's wrong with it, just how impressive a work it remains: impressive in its very seriousness (a seriousness I value more than all of *Blow-Up*'s cleverness), but also for its intensity of feeling and for the many parts of it which rise above the mystery plot's defects to attain a haunting life of their own. And despite its faults, it leaves one more impressed than before with the qualities of its director. For if a wholly definable personality has yet to emerge from Coppola's films as, for better or worse, one can be seen in the work of a Peckinpah or Altman, some features are nevertheless beginning to grow more clear. Coppola likes to make distinctions between his more "personal" work like *The Rain People* and a film such as *The Godfather,* whose success he seems to view with some ambivalence. Though, for all its imperfections, *The Rain People* is probably still my own favorite among Coppola's films, he is, I think, much more harsh in drawing invidious comparisons between it and *The Godfather* than is warranted. *The Conversation* seems, among other things, a deliberate attempt to turn away from the florid, operatic style of *The Godfather,* to create a kind of chamber work, which is perfectly valid except insofar as Coppola may believe the later film's unyieldingly somber mood and textural spareness are in themselves the mark of its superiority. Though I have reservations about *The Godfather,* as about all of Coppola's films, those reservations have nothing to do with that richness in portraiture and storytelling which has earned the film its popularity, and which really gives it more in common with *The Rain People* than that earlier, more "personal" work has with *The Conversation.* Coppola has said that, alone among his films, *The Conversation* began not with a character but a concept, and this shows, I think, in the character of Harry Caul. The story of *The Rain People* grows out of the character of the wife; the story of *The Conversation* is one for which Harry needed to be invented.

But if *The Conversation* began in ideas about "privacy" and "responsibility," it ends in Harry Caul, neither an abstraction nor a figure from the headlines but a singular human being tormented by his own private demons. Which is to say the film *is* about responsibility, not in any legalistic Watergate sense, but in *The Rain People*'s sense of our interconnectedness, and about a character, as much as the wife in *The Rain People,* in flight from that responsibility—from the burden of human contact and its attendant pain. And as in *The Rain People,* Coppola is able to depict such a character with a kind of cold, clear, unsentimental sympathy, without either condescension or moralizing: the kind of moralizing one sees in the Antonioni of *Blow-Up,* who so thoroughly condemns his protagonist to his irrelevancy as to have him literally vanish from sight as we watch. For all its flaws and its sharing with Coppola's other films the sense of having been made by an artist who hasn't yet wholly discovered his ideal materials, *The Conversation* stirs with an emergent life. The photographer-protagonist in *Blow-Up* is complete and perfect, but he's merely a construct, a conceit. Harry Caul may not be fully formed or quite understood, but he is a creation, and his squalid anguish is sometimes genuinely lived through.

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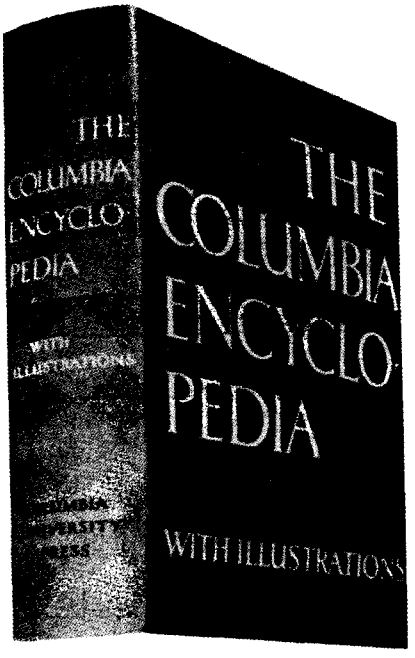

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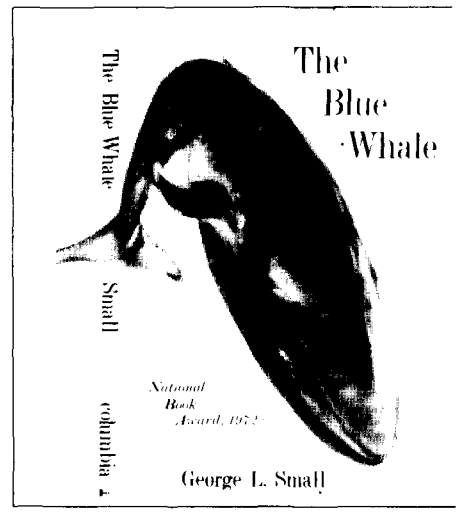

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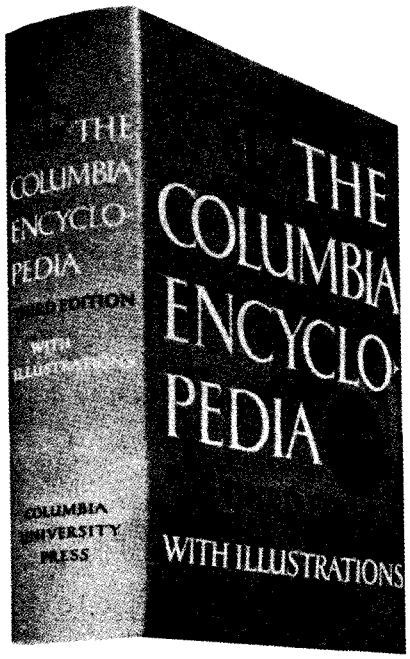

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Politics as Passion Play

CHOOSING OUR KING: POWERFUL SYMBOLS IN PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS. By MICHAEL NOVAK. *Macmillan. 324 pp. $7.95.*

Reviewed by PAUL H. WEAVER

IN 1970 Michael Novak went on leave from his academic post as professor of philosophy and religious studies at Old Westbury to work as a speech writer for Sargent Shriver, who was campaigning that fall for Democratic Congressional candidates. Plainly it was an eye-opening experience. Although as a liberal Catholic Novak had been intensely interested in politics during the 60's, he writes that "nothing in my education had quite prepared me for how different Americans are from one another"—or, by implication, for what Americans and American politics are really like. *Choosing Our King* is Novak's effort to come to terms with what he saw in 1970 and again in 1972, when he worked briefly for Edmund Muskie, covered the Democratic primaries for *Newsday*, and—despite differences he had with the candidate—joined the McGovern staff after the Miami convention.

It is not an especially well made book. Novak stitches together a bizarre variety of materials—campaign journalism, moral philosophy, political analysis, and cultural anthropology—in a way that is usually less than disciplined; as one makes one's way through the volume, one often has the feeling of reading the author's notes rather than the book that was to have been written from them. Yet despite this flaw, it is a fascinating piece of work, and not only because of its telling insights into the politics and personalities of 1972. It is also interesting as a report on the political education of a reluctant McGovernite. For *Choosing Our King* is not so much a campaign history or study in political science as it is a personal confession, and in searching out the lessons of his candidate's nomination and defeat Novak proves to be an honest and mostly unillusioned witness.

The problem with Americans, Novak argues, is their penchant for moralism—for the innocent yet arrogant belief that morality is simple, that everything would become morally attractive if only people saw the light, and that the purpose of American politics is to make life morally attractive. These beliefs, Novak says, are mistaken. Morality is in fact complex and ambiguous; people in any event have different, culturally-determined notions of the good; and it is impossible to act politically—here Novak offers an imaginative restatement of Reinhold Niebuhr's thesis about the disjunction between individual and social morality—without coming to have "dirty hands." When we proceed on assumptions other than these, things go wrong. People begin to behave badly. Disasters occur. Above all we lose the ability to see people and events for what they really are.

This moralism has left Americans with a mistaken idea of what Presidential politics is all about. We imagine that it is or ought to be a disinterested and rational affair in which "issues" are discussed, "qualifications" weighed, and "decisions" soberly taken. The reality, says Novak, is quite different. For politics is a mostly symbolic activity—a ritual, in fact—in which we express essentially religious beliefs about our identities, the moral geography of our lives, the nature of reality, and so on. This ritual focuses particularly on the President, who is monarch, priest, and prophet as well as a constitutional officer. This is not to say that he is all-powerful or non-answerable—only that when we look at a President, what we see is not just a chief executive, but a personification of the nation as a whole and a symbolic reflection of each of us as individuals. The President is an intimate participant in the lives of all Americans, shaping them and being shaped by them in turn. An election is thus a deeply religious event. For the candidate, the campaign is an ordeal that tests his worthiness for office and that reveals his identity; for the voter it is a pilgrimage of self-discovery.

Our moralism also prevents us from grasping the two main problems that confront every President or candidate. The first of these is the need to discover and live up to a public *persona* which people can believe and respond to. Meretricious "image-making" here will not work, says Novak; the *persona* must emerge from the candidate's true personality. Edmund Muskie is an interesting case in point. The reason Muskie lost, says Novak, is that he assumed an inauthentic identity manufactured for him by his campaign staff. He presented himself, not as the temperamental Polish American that he is, but as an imperturbable Yankee, which is why the crying incident in New Hampshire was such a devastating blow to his candidacy. The problem was not that Americans mistrust men who cry (Hubert Humphrey cries from time to time and is none the worse for it), but that the event showed Muskie to be something other than what he claimed to be. If he had assumed a more authentic *persona,* the tears would have been in character and the incident would have been passed over as insignificant. Muskie's other mistake, according to Novak, was to define himself explicitly as a man to be trusted ("Trust Muskie," the posters read). The problem was that this is an inherently unbelievable appeal. People know they will eventually be disappointed by politicians; to the extent they trust them anyway, it is as a by-product

PAUL H. WEAVER, *associate editor of the* Public Interest, *is completing a book on 20th-century journalism to be published by Basic Books.*

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of agreeing and identifying with them, not because they believe in their "trustworthiness" *per se*.

Candidates who solve the problem of their public identity must then cope with an even larger problem: pluralism. Because politics is religious and the Presidency priestly, a candidate cannot win unless he can personify and symbolize the religious sensibilities of a majority of Americans. These sensibilities are extremely diverse, and the differences among them are deep and tenacious. Novak develops an interesting and useful analysis of the various "civil religions" in America, of which there are two, five, or fifteen (depending on which of Novak's analytic schemes one has in mind). It doesn't matter how many; the important point is that pluralism involves something more important than pizza, Wiener schnitzel, and blintzes. It means that Americans live in radically different moral and cultural worlds, and that the symbolic demands they make on the Presidency are sharply in conflict. A candidate must therefore be more than just authentic; he must be authentically ecumenical —a difficult task under the best of circumstances, and an almost impossible feat to sustain for four or eight years under the intensive scrutiny of the media.

NOVAK's analysis of McGovern's defeat is straightforward. First, there was a problem with the McGovern *persona*. McGovern presented himself as being both moral and realistic—which is inherently unbelievable, and became acutely so in the aftermath of the Eagleton affair. Much more important was the fact that McGovern was, and defined himself as, a narrowly sectarian candidate. He symbolized the concerns of a "conscience constituency" made up of an intensely moralistic, college-educated "new class" that defined itself in opposition to the civic religions of working people and traditional ethnic groups—persons whose support is necessary for the election of any liberal candidate. McGovern created a symbolic vacuum in this critical political center, and Nixon, who has never been an intrinsically appealing public figure and who, historically, has also tended to define himself in a sectarian way, effortlessly moved in to fill it. Once McGovern was nominated, in short, the outcome was foreordained; not even Watergate was capable of affecting the result—though it may yet do so retroactively, and in any event has already diminished Richard Nixon even more drastically than the symbolic processes of our politics diminished McGovern, Muskie, Humphrey, and all the rest.

All of them, that is, except George Corley Wallace, who according to Novak was the only really gifted symbolic candidate running in 1972. His *persona* was authentic, it embodied the concerns of many Americans, it generated incomparably the most intense response received by any candidate, and it was greatly enlarged and dignified by the Governor's shooting and painful recovery. Novak warns that if Wallace runs seriously in 1976, he will be a truly formidable candidate—which is worth bearing in mind at a time when media speculation mentions only established Washington personages like Kennedy, Mondale, and Jackson, and which also raises a question. If George Wallace represents the sort of politician who flourishes in the religious-symbolic politics that Novak describes, is it possible that our real problem is not with candidates who don't measure up to the requirements of their craft, but with the religious-symbolic nature of the political environment that determines those requirements in the first place?

Novak resists putting the question this way, but he too is troubled by the implications of his analysis. If the Presidency is a religious-symbolic, plebiscitarian institution; if the symbolic preferences of the American people are largely fixed by historically-determined "civil religions"; if the McGovern ethos is inherently offensive to a large majority of Americans—then it follows that the "conscience constituency" should reformulate its beliefs or resign itself to impotence. Novak, perhaps understandably, resists that conclusion. Instead he parts company with the logic of his

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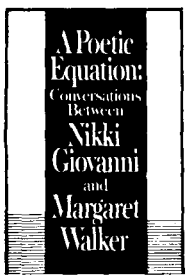

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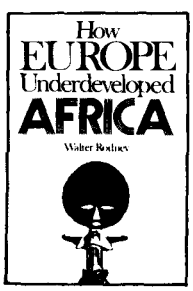

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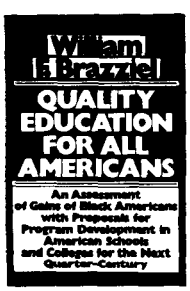
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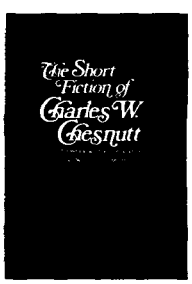

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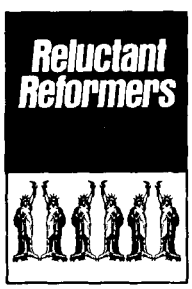

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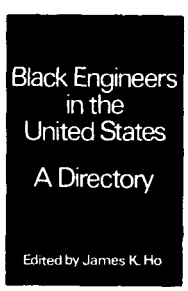

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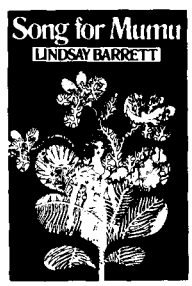

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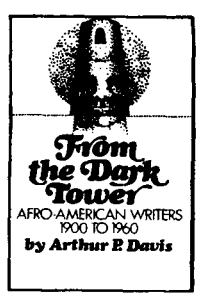

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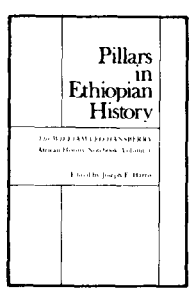

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analysis and urges a "reconstruction" of American civil religions, as if they were made of nothing more permanent than Tinker Toys. In their place we are asked to erect a "new, dark civil religion"—pluralistic, participatory, anti-materialist, un-moralistic, suffused with a sense of the nation's past failure, yet aglow with a vision of a universalistic future. Otherwise, writes Novak in words suggesting how hard it is to eliminate moralism from the American breast, we will be left with the "narrow, naive, immature," and "inadequate" faith that currently "imprisons" the nation and consigns us all to lives of "emptiness." Or: if *they* don't agree with *us*, then they'll just have to change their minds.

This is a pretty unsatisfactory way out of Novak's dilemma, but what is interesting is how he got into it. It has always been true that there is a religious-symbolic aspect to politics; it is also true that this aspect has become more important in recent years, with the advent of TV and the decline of the political party; and it is clear that the Presidency has become the focus of our symbolic passions. But from there it is a long—and I think unwarranted—step to saying that our politics is, and ought to be, *essentially* religious and expressive in nature. Novak takes that long step, partly out of intellectual enthusiasm for an interesting idea, but partly also, it is clear, because he seeks in American politics the rewards he envisions as flowing from his new, dark civil religion: a "genuine liberation" of the "energies of the heart," and an "obscure joy . . . springing from connection to the unfathomable mysteries and terrors of human life."

IF PEOPLE want a sense of purpose, Harold Macmillan once observed, let them go to their bishops, not to the politicians. Novak cites that statement (mistakenly attributing it to Edward Heath) and instantly dismisses it. He really should have taken it more seriously. Allowing for the fact that a measure of symbolism is natural and proper in politics, it says something that is true and important in a pluralistic liberal democracy, namely, that there are limits to what politics can do without ceasing to be pluralistic, liberal, or democratic. It would be no bad thing if this fact were more widely acknowledged. It is not just that gifted and thoughtful persons like Michael Novak would then not find themselves trapped, despite themselves, in a sterile, either/or, us-versus-them Manicheanism. It might even become possible to reverse the current trend of our politics, which is toward precisely the sort of symbolic passion play that Novak says it is already, or ideally ought to be. The events of 1972 and thereafter bear witness to the damage wrought by this view of the political process.

"Ordinary" Lives

ENORMOUS CHANGES AT THE LAST MINUTE. By GRACE PALEY. *Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 198 pp. $6.95.*

Reviewed by JANE LARKIN CRAIN

THE first collection of Grace Paley's short stories, *The Little Disturbances of Man,* appeared in 1959, and was greeted with lavish critical enthusiasm. Her latest book, *Enormous Changes at the Last Minute,* is a selection of the work she has done in the past fifteen years. Although her narrative voice has become somewhat more cryptic than it used to be, this second volume is essentially an extension of the first; Mrs. Paley's imagination continues to be fired by "ordinary" people fixed in reduced and unremarkable circumstances, living lives sodden with small and unengaging woes, in whom, were it not for Mrs. Paley's literary labors, we might take no interest whatsoever. As her narrator grandiloquently remarks, the point is to "tell their stories as simply as possible, in order, you might say, to save a few lives."

Most of the stories in *Enormous Changes at the Last Minute* reflect Mrs. Paley's highly stylized concep-

JANE LARKIN CRAIN has written reviews for COMMENTARY and Saturday Review/World.

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tion of lower-class, immigrant, or second-generation "ethnic" New York. Plot and action are, to say the least, secondary; the author's concern is primarily with the social milieu, and with the immediate thoughts and feelings of the people she portrays. There are a number of unwed mothers, most of them on relief, in *Enormous Changes*. Relationships between parents and children are sketched occasionally, with a dominant tone of mutual mystification, and a great deal of guilt and pain. Possessed at once with uncanny innocence and wisdom, children are loved and endured by burdened mothers who can't help themselves, and fled from by fathers who can't cope with the encumbrance. Thus, a character named Faith who appears several times both in this book and in *The Little Disturbances of Man* seems to have had a husband at some point, a man who fathered her two sons and then vanished. In the title story, a social worker and a "hippie" cab driver have an affair and a son; they don't marry, but she sets up a clinic for unwed mothers while he begins writing songs about paternity.

BY AND LARGE, the people in Mrs. Paley's fiction lead lives characterized by an almost surreal psychic isolation and a passivity bordering on despair. Despite statements like, "Everyone, real or imagined, deserves the open destiny of life," Mrs. Paley's "inventions" (as she herself calls her characters) are placed typically in bleak situations where their best hope is to survive, rather than to comprehend, let alone alter, the fate that has been meted out to them. Although there is little active or dramatic suffering, the threat of emotional violence is pervasive—engendered, perhaps, by the narrow horizons under which everyone in the book labors.

Mrs. Paley has remarked in an interview that, for reasons that elude her, "politics never turn up" in her stories, but it is difficult to believe that such a statement could have been made ingenuously. Even setting aside the portentous references to overtly political matters—"community action," the inadequacy of welfare stipends, the immorality of the Vietnam war—her stories are suffused with a set of narrow-minded attitudes and assumptions about the nature of experience in modern America that are borrowed wholesale from the communitarian/utopian ethos of the radical Left. Motherhood, the "plight" of women, the relationship between the sexes—virtually any human condition at all is relentlessly politicized in this setting, made to fit smoothly with the thesis of extreme victimization and polarization which is Mrs. Paley's representation of reality.

Such a reductive reading of life inevitably takes its literary toll. The stories have about them a self-conscious and mannered quality that mirrors their refusal to evoke any recognizable emotional or psychological reality. The dominant voice is the authorial one; narration and dialogue both are written in an idiosyncratic and elliptical language, making it seem as if, in addition to their other privations, Mrs. Paley's characters are without the means or the desire to understand anything about themselves or to communicate with one another in any but the most primitive and unrevealing fashion. The plotting in *Enormous Changes* ranges from the incredibly bad to the nonexistent, and the reader often gets the feeling that the author found herself in the middle of a story and then simply ran out of the imaginative energy necessary to complete it.

MRS. PALEY'S sense of herself as friend to the friendless is endlessly reiterated in these pages, but the note that sounds most clearly is one of cynicism and condescension, if not of enmity. Her bloodless "vision" of the way things "really" are leads to the minimizing of everything and everybody in her fictional world. Any life would inevitably be larger, more variegated, and more substantial, the scope of its possibility far wider, than Grace Paley even begins to allow in her stories. It is as if what she had set out to do was not to "save a few lives" but rather to kill off any possibility of rendering them imaginatively. In this she has nearly succeeded.

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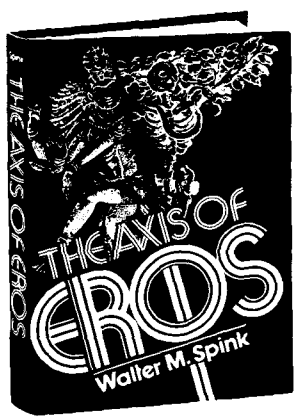

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THE PROVINCIALS: A PERSONAL HISTORY OF THE JEWS IN THE SOUTH. By ELI N. EVANS. *Atheneum. 396 pp. $10.95.*

Reviewed by LOUIS BERG

ELI EVANS is clearly the man to have done this very good book—part biography, part history, part sociology—about Southern Jews. Of Eastern European Jewish antecedents, he is also a third-generation Southerner. His father was mayor of Durham, N.C. for six consecutive terms, two of his uncles were mayors of other Southern towns, a maternal grandmother founded the first branch of Hadassah south of the Mason-Dixon line. Evans himself served for a time as a White House aide, later wrote speeches for Southern politicians, and traveled extensively in the South over a five-year period as grant officer for the Carnegie Foundation in the field of minority problems and governmental affairs.

All of these credentials went into the writing of *The Provincials*, which grew out of an article for *Harper's*. His family's prestige in the South, coupled with his own wide experience of and love for the region, made it possible for Evans to talk easily and on familiar terms with all manner of Southerners, both Gentile and Jewish: small Jewish shopkeepers and lofty grandees from Charleston and New Orleans; mill hands and Chapel Hill college professors; Ku Klux Klanners and black militants; rednecks and liberals; rabbis, Reform and Orthodox, and Christian clergymen of every denomination. A trained sociologist, Evans has also succeeded in putting these conversations into historical perspective.

He is weakest, perfunctory, on the other hand, when he is dealing with the early history of Jews in the South. These Jews played a larger role in their communities and were present in larger numbers than is generally assumed: in colonial times there were more Jews in Charleston than in New York City. Nor do the statistics—inadequate at best—take into account the Jewish traders dispersed throughout the nation, or the Jews in the Gulf States leading a Marrano-like existence because of Spanish and French interdictions. Southern Jews were more active in politics, if not in commerce, than their Northern counterparts (as witness the careers of David Yulee, Florida's first Senator, and Judah P. Benjamin, Secretary of State under the Confederacy). Their history, when fully told, will turn out to be a lively one—Jews were fur traders, embargo runners, slave-traders, cotton brokers; they captained ships that sailed the pirate-infested Spanish Main and carted goods through the infamous Natchez Trace; they were Indian fighters and duelists.

Yet always in the South Jews had to move with caution and sometimes with concealment. The South, never as philo-Semitic as Harry Golden would have us believe, ranged from the indifferently tolerant Tidewater to the suspicious and even hostile Bible Belt. Today, what emerges from Evans's observations and interviews is a region considerably calmer on the surface than it has been for a long time—and a lot calmer, one might add, than the North—but still by no means purged of its old racial and religious antagonisms. Evans does not minimize the streak of violence in the Southern character or the fury of prejudices that even in the so-called New South are liable to erupt at a moment's notice. The author himself is too young to have experienced personally the last great wave of anti-Semitism which swept across the South in the wake of the Leo Frank murder case of 1913—when a Jewish resident of Atlanta was lynched by an angry mob on suspicion of having murdered a Gentile girl in his employ—but many older Jews with whom Evans spoke are still haunted by the memory. One of them described how his father had stopped going out in public for a long time after the incident, simply because he bore a certain resemblance to Leo Frank. Another

LOUIS BERG, *a frequent contributor, grew up in the South and is a long-time student of American-Jewish history.*

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told how his parents had been so discouraged by the episode that they had simply sold the family store and moved away. Many families left Atlanta temporarily in the wake of the lynching.

If the kind of vintage anti-Semitism expressed by the Leo Frank case is a thing of the past, anti-Jewish feeling today is likely to be linked with the overall racial struggle. It is still no easy matter in parts of the South to be a liberal in racial matters, and to be both a liberal and a Jew constitutes a kind of double jeopardy, hazardous not only to the particular individual involved but to the entire community. Given this vulnerability, Evans is inclined to be lenient with those Southern Jews who have remained aloof from the civil-rights movement. As a Southerner himself, he is sensitive to the ambiguity and complexity of the situation:

> Much of what has been written about Jews in the South has come out of crisis situations—after a bombing, during demonstrations, in the midst of a boycott—when tensions were highest and fears greatest. Few observers took the time to look through the clichés to the nuances—the differences between generations, between the professional men and the shopkeepers, between the German Jews and the East Europeans, and above all, the difference between private views and public acts. . . .

In general, Evans finds that Southern Jews are more liberal than their Gentile counterparts, sympathetic to the rights of blacks even when unwilling or afraid to stick their necks out, and this was true even in the darkest, most unregenerate Jim Crow period.

Evans pictures the South as a fairly comfortable place for Jews these days, particularly in the more liberal urban centers like Atlanta, Norfolk, New Orleans, and Nashville, where they are now tending to congregate. The mass migration of large numbers of poor whites and blacks to the industrial North has in some sense left the South freer of social pressures than it has ever been. Evans's conclusions are guardedly optimistic:

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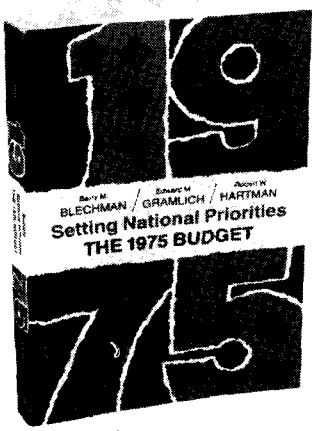
—Boston Globe*



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The passions of the past are still present and can explode at any moment; the bitter memories cannot be erased quickly on either side. But in so many ways, the South today is the most optimistic section of America.

EVANS's fine portrait of the Jews of the South takes its place in a series which now includes Stephen Birmingham's ebullient accounts of the German-Jewish and Sephardic communities of New York, Ande Manners's study of the Eastern European Jewish migration, *Poor Cousins*, and the many local histories sponsored by individual Jewish communities. We are getting to know more and more about the history of the Jews in this country, although there are many gaps remaining, among them the story of the Jews on the American frontier, particularly in the Far West—to my mind perhaps the most fascinating chapter of all. But gradually the history of Jewish settlement in America is coming to be written.

By Sex Obsessed

THOMAS JEFFERSON: AN INTIMATE HISTORY. By FAWN M. BRODIE. *Norton. 591 pp. $12.50.*

Reviewed by
DAVID HERBERT DONALD

THE time has come, it seems, to erect a new tombstone for Thomas Jefferson. Before the Virginia statesman died he requested that his grave marker record him as "Author of the Declaration of Independence, and of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom, and Father of the University of Virginia." But if we are to believe Fawn M. Brodie, that inscription should be replaced by one that reads: "Thomas Jefferson, Attempted Seducer of his Best Friend's Wife, Adulterer with Mrs. Richard Cosway, and Sire of Numerous Illegitimate Children by his Slave Sally."

All appearances to the contrary notwithstanding, Mrs. Brodie is not trying to debunk Jefferson, whom she greatly admires. Instead, she appears to be a disciple of the late A. C. Kinsey and believes that a man ought to be judged by the fullness and frequency of his sex life. Since Thomas Jefferson was a very great man, he obviously could not have been the "somewhat monkish, abstemious, continent, and virtually passionless" figure portrayed by previous biographers. He must have had a string of amatory adventures. *Thomas Jefferson: An Intimate History* is Mrs. Brodie's heroic effort to restore to Jefferson his full humanity.

Mrs. Brodie has some trouble in finding sexual excitement in Jefferson's career. His relations with his wife, the beautiful but constantly ailing Martha Wayles, certainly did not break any of Kinsey's records. Nor, despite Mrs. Brodie's enthusiastic exertions, can much mileage be gained from the tale that in his youth Jefferson, during the absence of his friend John Walker, made an improper advance toward Mrs. Walker. What, if anything, happened remains obscure. Betsy Walker seems not to have told her husband about Jefferson's conduct until years later, and in turn, Walker made nothing of it until spurred on by one of Jefferson's political enemies. By that time the ill-used husband had come to believe that Jefferson spent most of his time between 1769 and 1779 trying to seduce Betsy. Instead of attending the Continental Congress and drafting the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson was really lurking around in his shirttail, behind half-opened doors, waiting to assault that poor lady as she frantically rushed back and forth from her room to the toilet. During Jefferson's Presidency, when the *Federalist* newspaper printed this story, readers were less shocked than incredulous. "We have heard of a ten-year siege of Troy," Tom Paine joked, "but who ever heard of a ten-year siege to seduce?"

Mrs. Brodie has better luck in proving Jefferson's "vital sexuality" in the flirtation he had, after his wife's death, with Maria Cosway in France. He carefully preserved the notes he received from this exquisite and rather flighty lady, and he kept copies of the stately essays he wrote in return. Nothing in the correspondence indicates that the two progressed beyond an epistolary romance, but Mrs. Brodie, drawing upon "feeling as well as fact," upon "nuance and metaphor as well as idea and action," is sure what happened. Jefferson, she is confident, consummated his "new, if hidden, happiness" in an apartment he rented in a distant section of Paris, where he and Maria could safely meet.

All this, however, is simply the warm-up for the major episode in Jefferson's sexual history: his infatuation for his own slave, Sally Hemings. Here at last Mrs. Brodie finds Jefferson exhibiting that sexual vitality every great man must have. He seduced the beautiful mulatto when she came to Paris as his daughter's maid, and he brought her back to America pregnant with his first illegitimate son. Installing Sally at Monticello, he gave her the special and exclusive care of his bedroom. Her duties consisted of more than dusting. Mrs. Brodie reckons that she bore by Jefferson some six slave children, who strikingly resembled their father. Though prudes might think Jefferson was engaging in "scandalous debauchery with an innocent slave woman," Mrs. Brodie cheers him on. Jefferson and Sally shared "a serious passion" that brought them both "much private happiness over a period lasting thirty-eight years."

The fact that no other Jefferson biographer—and all of them have had access to exactly the same sources Mrs. Brodie uses—accepts these tales of his sexual prowess troubles Mrs. Brodie not at all. After all, she darkly warns, scholars like Dumas Malone, who has just published the fifth volume of his definitive biography of Jefferson,* Julian P. Boyd, who is pre-

DAVID HERBERT DONALD *is Charles Warren Professor of American History at Harvard.*

* *Jefferson the President: Second Term, 1805-1809* (Little, Brown, 704 pp., $14.50). Readers interested in such subjects as Jefferson's Presidency, the workings of the American party system, the Lewis and Clark expedition, the Aaron Burr conspiracy, and the origins of the War of 1812 can profitably read Malone's elegant, authoritative account. Mrs Brodie has little to say on these matters.

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paring the authoritative edition of Jefferson's writings, and Merrill D. Peterson, whose *Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation* is the best one-volume life, are part of the "Jefferson Establishment," who are not even "aware of the strength of their internal commitment to canonization." A good psychoanalyst, she suggests, could probably ferret out the hidden motives that made these scholars so "extremely protective of . . . [Jefferson's] intimate life."* Anyway, all these biographers are males, not gifted with the "feeling" and the "nuance" necessary for a book about "Jefferson and the life of the heart."

Nor is Mrs. Brodie bothered that she can adduce only slim factual support for her tales of what she primly calls Jefferson's "intimate life." Reluctantly she confesses that there is "no real evidence" as to what happened in the Betsy Walker case. Jefferson's relations with Maria Cosway were so aboveboard that "this was the one love affair he was clearly willing to share with history." And documentation for the liaison with Sally Hemings is "simply unrecoverable." Such absence of evidence would stop most historians, but it does not faze Mrs. Brodie. Where there are documents, she knows how to read them in a special way. If Jefferson, writing about Mrs. Cosway, complained of losing letters through "many infidelities in the post office," he was really referring to Maria's unfaithfulness to her husband. (One presumes that when Jefferson wrote Ralph Izard about "infidelities of the post office" he was giving a hint of a homosexual passion that Mrs. Brodie has inexcusably overlooked.) Where documents have been lost, Mrs. Brodie can make much of the gap. Doubtless the whole story of Jefferson's passion for Sally was revealed in one of his letters that has "curiously"—one of Mrs. Brodie's favorite words—been destroyed. Mrs. Brodie is masterful in using negative evidence too. The fact that Jefferson's Farm Book, in which he scrupulously itemized all his expenses, shows

* Fawn M. Brodie, "Jefferson Biographers and the Psychology of Canonization," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, II (Summer 1971), pp. 155-71.

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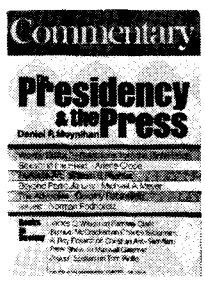

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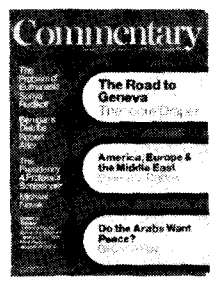

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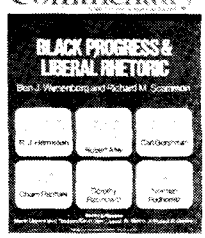

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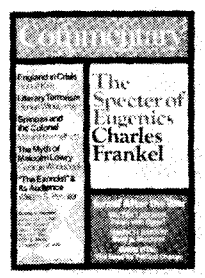

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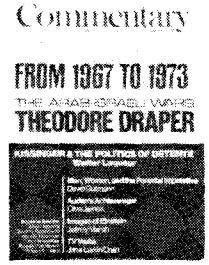

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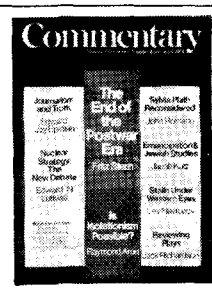

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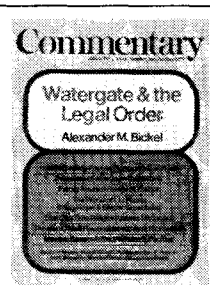

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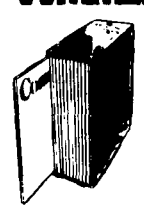

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that he gave no favorite treatment to Sally and her offspring can only mean that he was surreptitiously slipping her the money that he listed under "Charity."

But Mrs. Brodie is at her best when there is no evidence whatever to cloud her vision. Then she is free to speculate. "It seems likely. . . . One can only guess. . . ," she begins a paragraph describing Sally's feelings upon returning from France to America and to slavery. "No one can know," she says of Jefferson's sentiments on this occasion—and then proceeds to reveal in detail what he must have felt. Where there are no troublesome documents, Mrs. Brodie can offer proof by coincidence: is it not significant that Jefferson's daughter decided to become a nun during the same month that he ordered some clothing for his slave Sally? And is it not even more revealing that another Jefferson daughter married and left home shortly after Sally gave birth to one of her numerous children? In the absence of any reference to Sally in all the letters of Jefferson and his daughters, does not silence constitute overwhelming evidence that the daughters knew all about the affair with the slave girl and disapproved of it?

A marvel of industry and enterprise, Mrs. Brodie's biography bears less resemblance to any conventional historical work than it does to Ignatius Donnelly's devoted efforts to prove by an ingenious cipher that Francis Bacon wrote the works of Shakespeare. Indeed, in Mrs. Brodie's untiring hands, the whole corpus of Jefferson's writing and records has become a kind of elaborate cryptogram, which she has decoded to reveal his sexual secrets. She has certainly tried harder than any previous biographer to show that Thomas Jefferson was a secret swinger. But she ought to have given her book a better title. Why not "By Sex Obsessed"?

SOLZHENITSYN

"I think that few people having read this book would be the same as when they opened its first page. In this respect, it seems to me that nothing in Russian or world literature can compare with it."
—*Roy Medvedev*

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Understanding Pluralism

ETHNIC CONFLICT AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT. By CYNTHIA H. ENLOE. *Little, Brown. 282 pp. $4.95.*

Reviewed by MURRAY FRIEDMAN

ETHNIC nationalism, with its accompanying toll of racial and religious conflict, would seem to be on the rise everywhere in the world today. In the Middle East, Jews and Arabs have just emerged from their fourth war in twenty-five years, and in Northern Ireland the historic tensions between Protestants and Catholics continue to erupt into almost daily violence. In Canada there is Quebec separatism; in Belgium, increasing friction between Flemings and Walloons; in Spain, a resurgence of Basque nationalism; in Great Britain, growing Scottish and Welsh nationalist movements, in addition to the Irish problem; in South Africa, *apartheid;* in the United States, continuing racial tension. There is no escape, not even to Fiji, where descendants of the Indian settlers are embroiled with the native islanders.

This widespread phenomenon is generally seen in terms of a struggle for power between exploiters and exploited, between "colonial" authority and oppressed "subjects" (however broadly these terms are interpreted). While there is some truth in this view, it does not apply in every instance. For example, it does not help us to understand the Biafran attempt at secession from Nigeria, where blacks battled blacks with an estimated loss of over a million lives, or Uganda's expulsion of Indians long resident in the country. Yesterday's exploited are quite capable of becoming today's exploiters, and cultural differences can prove more decisive than class differences.

For Cynthia H. Enloe, who has written a most illuminating book on the subject, the phenomenon of present-day ethnic nationalism is to be viewed through the filter

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of the "new pluralism," a conceptual theory of society that many scholars, including political scientists like Dr. Enloe, have taken up to explain a variety of social situations. As she describes it, the unitary state or nation—a comparative latecomer on the stage of history—has often joined together groups of questionable compatibility, ill-mated partners who find it difficult to forge a common national life because of differing values, special interests, or long histories of mutual conflict. Even a long-standing and seemingly stable society like Great Britain, according to A. J. P. Taylor (whose view is cited by the author), stands in danger at some future date of breaking up into its original national and ethnic components.

THE ethnic mobilization now taking place throughout the world, Dr. Enloe argues, has become a means of forcing doubts about modernity in general into the open—causing us to recognize "the elements of oppression in most political systems." Of course, the present rise of ethnic consciousness is itself a result of the success of modernization, which equips ethnic communities with new political resources and aspirations. The most up-to-date forms of communication and transportation are available to all, even in the most remote places, and for many ethnic groups this has led to a heightened awareness of subordinate status, with all the attendant disaffections. As for the trend toward suburbanization, one of the more striking developments of the postwar years, Dr. Enloe sees this as helping to reassemble ethnic groups and strengthen group ties.

Dr. Enloe challenges the widely held view that progress in society is measured by the movement from "narrow tribalism" to the modern, highly centralized, national state. She reminds us that ethnic mobilization can often be a source of innovative social and political reform, and she argues that the truly farsighted nation builders in the modern world have been pragmatic shapers of multi-ethnic societies.

Dr. Enloe rounds out her survey with a particularly trenchant discussion of the ethnic picture in Communist societies. In the course of their efforts to overthrow the old regimes, both Russian and Chinese Communist leaders cultivated various national sentiments by promising local autonomy or even independent status to ethnic groups. However, once in power they promptly reneged on their promises and embarked on a course of centralization which demanded the assimilation of ethnic minorities.

A major problem in the Soviet Union today, widely recognized although rarely discussed in public, is the so-called "50 per-cent problem": how to maintain the Great Russian hegemony in such areas as Soviet Central Asia where the mostly Moslem population is rapidly and vastly increasing. (Indeed, one of Moscow's greatest fears is the decomposition of the Soviet empire, along the lines predicted by Andrei Amalrik in his book, *Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984?*) In China, where the Han Chinese are the major ethnic group, non-Han Chinese are excluded from top posts in party leadership, even in their home regions, and, following the Great Leap Forward, are being pressed to comply with central directives.

DR. ENLOE'S wide-ranging discussion of ethnic conflict prompts a closer look at the American experience with a multi-ethnic society. On the face of it, what with the bewildering array of religious, ethnic, and national groups that make up American society, it would appear that the U.S. is ripe for a massive social upheaval. And yet, except for the Civil War, Americans have managed to hold together as a nation and to extend social and economic opportunities to a succession of groups. The effort is by no means completed, but at a time when attention is focused on the failures of American life, it is important to recognize that by and large this society has succeeded notably in containing ethnic frictions of the sort that are still causing havoc in so many places throughout the world.

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Ethnic Identification Among American Jews

Arnold Dashefsky, University of Connecticut, **Howard M. Shapiro,** University of New Hampshire

Although this book considers both intergroup and outgroup hostility as factors in the growth of Jewish identification, it focuses on the individual's interpersonal relationships and his position within the social structure. The authors assert that factors such as a viable Jewish education, positive Jewish experiences with parents and friends during adolescence, and current involvement with other Jews are all important for Jewish identification. By viewing identification within the context of social psychology they make a significant contribution to the knowledge of religious and ethnic groups and such basic issues as identity, identification, and socialization. They not only formulate the concept of identification, but consider it in terms of such issues as generation, family and peer expectations and activities, father-son relations and aspects of one's current social situation (i.e., religion, class, etc.). Notes, tables, figures, appendixes, bibliography.

CONTENTS: 1. Being Jewish: A Sociological Approach. 2. Methods and Measures. 3. Becoming a Jew: The Younger Generation. 4. Adolescent Experience and Adult Activity. 5. The Older Generation: Comparisons and Contrasts with the Younger Generation. 6. The Shaping of Perspectives: Consequences of Being Jewish. 7. Retrospect and Prospect.

In Press **Summer 1974**
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ALSO . . .

Familial Structure and Function as Influence

Robert F. Winch, Northwestern University, **Margaret T. Gordon,** University of Illinois at Chicago Circle and Institute for Juvenile Research

Why do some social systems have more influence on their members than others? This study examines nuclear families with college-age sons as objects of influence and demonstrates that having two suitable models rather than one (an older brother as well as a father) is associated with a high level of influence. Functionally, the authors show that a high level of status-conferring is associated with a high level of familial and paternal—but not maternal—influence. They state that there is a reciprocal relationship between the influence of the primary system (father and family) and that of the secondary system (fraternity and peers), but the influence of the mother—while less than that of the father—is less variable than the father's. Notes, tables, figures, appendixes, index.

CONTENTS: 1. Statement of the Problem. 2. The Concept of Identification. 3. Structure and Function: Theorizing about the Independent Variables. 4. The Design. 5. Some Methodological Concerns. 6. Analysis and Results. 7. Some Efforts at Interpretation. 8. The Interviewees. 9. Summary and Conclusion.

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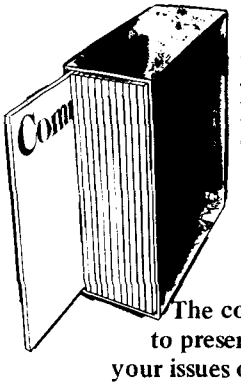

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Morality Tale

ELSEWHERE, PERHAPS. By AMOS OZ. Translated by NICOLAS DE LANGE. *Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 309 pp. $7.95.*

Reviewed by DAVID STERN

AMOS OZ has emerged in recent years as the best known of the younger Israeli novelists and a leading spokesman for the generation of *sabras* who grew up along with the State of Israel. In a country where "sensational" novels, and certainly those with any pretense to seriousness, are a relative rarity, Oz's works have gained considerable popularity, even notoriety, for both the controversiality of their themes and the boldness of their presentation. This was especially true of *My Michael*, the novel which served to introduce Oz to American readers, and which Oz wrote when he was scarcely twenty-eight years old. A study of the personal disintegration of a young Israeli housewife, *My Michael* succeeded in transforming a political "fact"—the Arab-Israeli dilemma—into a genuine metaphor of the imagination. The violence of its heroine's erotic fantasies of abduction and rape by Arab twins with whom she had grown up before the War of Independence in 1948 suggested another violence even more disturbing to the Israeli psyche than the political one. Jerusalem, the setting of the novel and a still-divided city, was depicted as a dense, opaque landscape mirroring the heroine's inner conflict, an illusion of abstractions set upon a wilderness of suppressed violence, ever on the verge of upheaval by demiurgic powers.

Both in *My Michael* and in his later work, Oz has demonstrated a special talent for creating fiction out of the exigencies of Israel's political and historical legacy. It is a talent that is again evident, although to a considerably lesser degree, in *Elsewhere, Perhaps,* Oz's second novel—second, that is, to appear in English; actually, it is a reworked and truncated version of the author's first novel, published in Israel in 1966. Like *My Michael,* the present work also purports to offer a critical glance at an aspect of Israeli society: the most sacrosanct of Israel's social institutions, the kibbutz.

Oz's fictional settlement, Metzudat Ram, situated on the northern border, is a far cry from the typical kibbutz usually shown to foreign tourists. The founding fathers of Metzudat Ram, now deep into middle-age, have lost the idealism of their youth. Their optimistic belief in the efficacy of collective living to solve all of the problems of the human condition, a faith which sustained them through the years of hardship and deprivation, has now been reduced to a matter of habit. Although they enjoy a certain measure of material prosperity, the price for this has turned out to be an embourgeoisement of their lives. The kibbutz, in short, has turned into just another small town, an Israeli Peyton Place: one-third boredom, and two-thirds gossip.

The arch-topic of gossip in Metzudat Ram, and the one which gives this novel the better part of its plot, is a double case of adultery involving the families of Reuven Harish, kibbutz poet-schoolteacher, and Ezra Berger, kibbutz truck-driver—Harish with Berger's wife, Bronka; Berger, somewhat more improbably, with Harish's teenage daughter, Noga. But these melodramatic escapades soon fade in interest as it becomes clear that everything in the novel has been called into being only to serve a single schematic purpose. Metzudat Ram and its cast of characters are merely a scaffolding for the morality play Oz has chosen to stage.

Like all morality plays, this one deals in predictable dualities and opposites. Thus, the population of Metzudat Ram is divided between immigrant-settlers from Russia and Germany, with each group retaining its dominant national character traits—the Germans stolid, efficient, humorless; the Russians imaginative, vociferous, given to occasional abandonment. Thus, too, the physical setting of the kibbutz—a landscape of mountains and valleys, "rich in contrasts, contrasts between ap-

DAVID STERN *is a young writer who is currently doing graduate work at Harvard.*

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pearance and reality." And thus, more concretely, the novel's two main protagonists, Reuven Harish and Ezra Berger—the former blond, thin, light-skinned; the latter, dark, heavy-limbed, earthy—whose surnames, incidentally, are simply tags borrowed from Hebrew and German for valley and mountain. And finally, locked in the grip of this novel's unrelenting dualism, there is a representation of conflict between Zion and Diaspora, played out between "new" Jews, as embodied in the settlers of Metzudat Ram, and "old" ones, personified by two "exilic" Jews from Germany, a tourist by the name of Isaac Hamburger and Siegfried Berger, Ezra's brother.

Unfortunately, Oz's determination to force an allegory out of the implausible Zion-Diaspora conflict works at cross-purposes to and eventually defeats the novel's more interesting intention: the naturalistic exposé of the "other side" of kibbutz life. The members of Metzudat Ram never seem more than a bland force of personalized Goodness, while the Arabs and the Diaspora Jews are forever being straitjacketed into Oz's embodiment of the power of Evil. In a scheme as rigid and predetermined as this, little opportunity remains for specificity or nuance. There is, in fact, no essential difference between the "new" and "old" Jews *in* their Jewishness—neither are recognizably Jewish—except, perhaps, for the novel's "evil fairy," Siegfried Berger, who is embellished by Oz with all the grotesque flourishes that once marked the typical anti-Semitic caricature of the Jew.

Israeli literature, if it is ever to mature, will undoubtedly have to confront the critical issue of the relation of Diaspora Jewry to Israel, and the relation of Israel to Diaspora Jewry, in all its troubled complexity. That this issue has a special poignancy for the Israeli writer, whose own identity is forged in an ongoing dialectic between the secular values of Western culture and the religious-historical values of Judaism, should go without saying. But an allegory of the kind presented in *Elsewhere, Perhaps* is little more than a refusal to acknowledge the existence of the problem. The novel fails precisely where the imagination might have offered insight into the nexus of Zion and Diaspora.

Judging the Judges

THE PRICE OF PERFECT JUSTICE: THE ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES OF CURRENT LEGAL DOCTRINE ON THE AMERICAN COURTROOM. By MACKLIN FLEMING. *Basic Books. 196 pp. $10.00.*

Reviewed by JOSEPH W. BISHOP, JR.

Ex *California semper aliquid novum.* This time it is a book about the defects of American justice. What is novel is that Macklin Fleming, once a trial judge, and now a Justice of the California Court of Appeals, does not make the accusations that we are accustomed to find between hard covers —that the system is harsh, that there is one justice for the rich and another for the poor, that capital punishment is cruel and barbarous and imprisonment no better, and so forth and so on. Not at all. His complaint is that our system of justice, especially criminal justice, works badly, that it does not do what it is supposed to do and does do a great many things which are none of its business, and that the fault is largely that of the judges themselves. And, in his dry but lucid way, with a wealth of convincing and sometimes appalling examples, he frequently makes his point. It is an odd, unfashionable, and disturbing book.

There is undoubtedly a widespread feeling, even among lawyers, that something is rotten in the state of our criminal justice. At least nine serious crimes out of ten go unpunished. Even the most zealous civil libertarians, faithful believers in the dogma that it is better that ninety-nine guilty men go free than that one guilty man be convicted, have lately begun to feel twinges of doubt and heresy. The American Civil Liberties Union, for example, has been astoundingly silent in the debate as

JOSEPH W. BISHOP, JR. *is Richard Ely Professor of Law at Yale.*

The new novel by the author of
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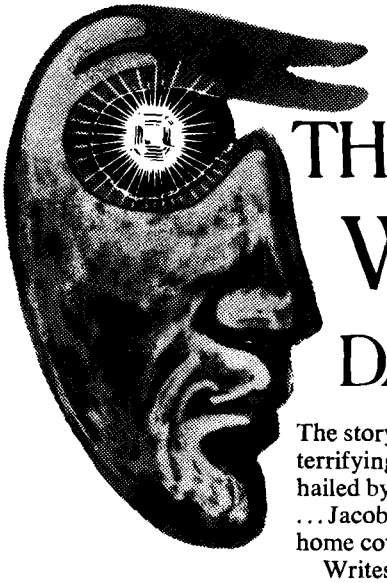

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to whether there should be a relaxation of the rules that have long made it so difficult to get a conviction in a rape case, notably the rule that an accused cannot be found guilty on the uncorroborated testimony of the victim. If ACLU reasserts its traditional solicitude for persons accused of crime (Nixonites always excepted), it risks grave offense to the women's liberation movement, whose members lean to the view that as few technical barriers as possible should be interposed between rapists and the *Zuchthaus*.

Despite the doubts and murmurs, and despite the changes in the membership of the Supreme Court, defendants in criminal cases are still getting due process in such quantity that, as Justice Fleming sees it, the incarceration of even the most obviously guilty criminal is a task comparable to landing a barracuda with a trout-rod and a dry-fly. More than half the book is devoted to an exhaustive description of the numerous techniques by which an accused with an astute, well-paid, and/or zealous lawyer can delay or frustrate his prosecution, litigate the same issue (which may have little or nothing to do with his guilt or innocence) in several different courts, state and federal, and, should he actually be convicted, attack the constitutionality of that conviction by endless appeals and petitions for *habeas corpus*. He can start before trial by seeking to enjoin the prosecution on the ground that its threat chills an asserted constitutional right. He can attack the indictment by claiming that some ethnic or other group to which he claims to belong—people with Spanish surnames, young people, old people, people with low incomes, people with little education, etc., etc., *ad infinitum*—were inadequately represented on the panel from which the grand jury was drawn. This issue can be litigated, appealed, and reviewed by collateral process in both state and federal courts for months and years. Similar attacks can be made on the composition of the trial jury. Likewise, he can seek to disqualify the trial judge for alleged bias and appeal the judge's refusal to disqualify himself. He can assert that appointed defense counsel is incompetent, before, during, and after the trial. He can demand that he be allowed to represent himself. If the request is denied and he loses his case, he can appeal on that ground; if it is granted, he can appeal on that ground also, arguing that the trial judge should have recognized his unfitness to be his own lawyer. He can move to suppress evidence, even when its truth and relevance are unquestioned, on the ground that it was obtained illegally; Justice Fleming itemizes twenty-six separate state and federal proceedings in which a defendant can challenge the lawfulness of a single search or seizure. Moreover, he can petition for *habeas corpus ad libitum*, hoping finally to find a federal judge who agrees with him and disagrees with all the other judges, for the doctrine of *res judicata*—that an issue finally determined by a court cannot be reopened—does not apply to *habeas corpus*, and a single federal district judge can spring a convict whose arguments have been unanimously rejected by a state's supreme court and other federal judges. If all else fails, the petitioner can argue that the inadequacy of the prison's law library denies him due process or the equal protection of the laws. These, I emphasize, are only a small sampling of Justice Fleming's catalogue (all documented by actual cases) of the devices which make it a labor of Sisyphus to put a criminal in jail and keep him there. One who loses at every step can almost claim that that very fact shows he has been denied equal protection of the law.

Justice Fleming's indignation, though controlled and temperate, probably leads to some exaggeration. Obviously, a sizable number of felons, however small in relation to the whole criminal population, do go to prison and do serve their sentences. But the cost of protracted litigation, of multiple trials and appellate reviews of the same issues, is enormous—and not only in terms of money and energy. Justice Fleming concludes in substance that

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our cost analysis is defective. In our obsessive desire to eliminate entirely the risk that an innocent man will be punished, we do not count the cost of letting guilty men go free. If a heroin wholesaler is left at large, not because there is any doubt of his guilt, but because the evidence against him was obtained by an unlawful search or wiretap, or there was a breach of the elaborate ritual of due process, what is the cost in life and happiness to innocent people? The same cost analysis should be applied to armed robbers, rapists, terrorists, and every other predator—always assuming that there is no reasonable doubt of his guilt—whose liberty creates great and imminent danger to the innocent people on whom he preys. To exclude sound evidence because it has been unlawfully obtained is to punish the public instead of the police. In the words of Benjamin Nathan Cardozo,

> The criminal is to go free because the constable has blundered. . . . The pettiest peace officer would have it in his power, through overzeal or indiscretion, to confer immunity upon an offender for crimes the most flagitious. A room is searched against the law, and the body of a murdered man is found. If the place of discovery may not be proved, the other circumstances may be insufficient to connect the defendant with the crime. The privacy of the home has been invaded, and the murderer goes free.

Even if the constable's invasion of the criminal's rights is not a mere blunder, but deliberate, it is permissible to wonder whether the public would not be better served if *both* the constable and the criminal were punished.

JUSTICE FLEMING's major thesis, embodied in the title of his book, is that the struggle for an unattainable perfection, the constant expansion of the constitutional rights of people accused of crime, has done little to protect the innocent, much to protect the guilty, and more to harm the innocent victims of crime. As Holdsworth long ago pointed out, the Chancery practice of the time of *Bleak House* (which, at its worst, per-

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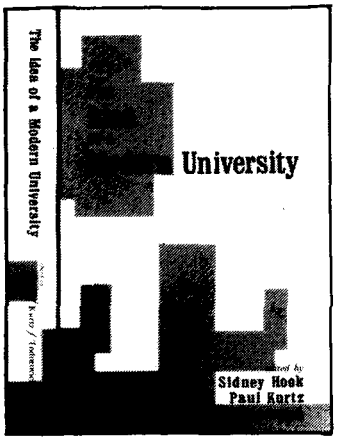

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mitted an issue to be litigated only five times) was based on a noble purpose to achieve perfect justice, regardless of delay or expense. *Jarndyce* v. *Jarndyce*, a paradigm of a multitude of real cases, showed the result of that noble purpose.

When the Supreme Court, some thirty years ago, expanded the process of collateral review, and the number of federal constitutional rights, there were undoubtedly evils to be cured. There was reason to doubt the fairness of many state trials and also the adequacy of state appellate review. But, as often happens in the United States, we seem to have overdone the cure—in effect reasoning that if one cc. of cortisone does the patient good, 10 cc. will do him ten times as much good. It is not easy, in fact, to find a case in which it seems probable, or even reasonably possible, that an innocent man was punished. Henry Friendly, one of the ablest among federal judges, would limit collateral review of convictions to cases in which there is real doubt of the petitioner's guilt. He cited as an example of such a case *Miller* v. *Pate*, in which the Supreme Court in 1967 freed a man who had eleven years earlier been convicted of the rape and murder of an eight-year-old girl. Alas, Justice Fleming's exhaustive examination of the evidence in that case (including some vital evidence that the Supreme Court ignored) leaves the reader with small doubt that the original verdict of guilty was just. But if even Judge Friendly did not find a clear instance of innocence vindicated by collateral review, any layman can accumulate examples of unpunished guilt until he wearies of the task.

THE monstrous hypertrophy of criminal procedure has, Justice Fleming argues with considerable persuasiveness, been aggravated by the natural inclination of a great many judges and justices to see themselves as commissioned by the Constitution, or possibly the Deity, to enforce what is right in their eyes, to judge the United States as Samuel judged Israel. The Constitution, as Charles Evans Hughes long ago observed, is what the judges say it is; if they cannot find anything in it which clearly supports their own notions of equity, they can and often do talk about shock to the judicial conscience, and "penumbras" and "emanations" of the actual provisions of the Constitution, or even, God preserve us, Natural Law. The Warren Court did not, of course, invent such techniques. The earliest example seems to be Dred Scott's case, in which Chief Justice Taney held that the limitations on slavery in the Missouri Compromise deprived slaveowners of their liberty and property without due process of law. Broad construction and judicial activism were employed in the first three decades of the present century to strike down various statutes attempting to improve the conditions of labor. In those days the Court was, of course, as heartily detested by liberals as the Warren Court was by the law-and-order crowd. But there was not much the progressives could do about it, except hope that the conservative or reactionary Justices would die and be replaced by jurists of their own persuasion.

I question Justice Fleming's conclusion that "the Supreme Court [has] absolute power in oligarchical corporate form, power the Court exercises without any effective restraint." There are times, exemplified during the Civil War and Reconstruction, when the Court holds its hand because it has reason to believe that the President and Congress would not heed its decision. But it is true that in the vast majority of cases the issue is not great enough to justify a constitutional crisis, and the Court is obeyed. (Justice Fleming complains, with some reason, that the judges often invoke the Constitution in matters of vast unimportance, such as regulation by school authorities of the students' dress and hairiness.)

The textbook examples of the Supreme Court as the ultimate *Gesetzgeber* are, of course, *Roe* v. *Wade* and *Doe* v. *Bolton*, the abortion decisions of 1973. There the Court, seeking and finding light on the inner meaning of the Fourteenth Amendment from such sources as the Hippocratic Oath, the writings of Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics and Pythagoreans, and placing special weight on the views of the eminent Ephesian gynecologist, Soranos (with whom every state legislator is no doubt familiar), solemnly held that the Constitution confers upon women an unqualified right to terminate pregnancy during the first three months, a qualified right to do so during the next three months, and no right to an abortion after the sixth, or perhaps the seventh, month. This may or may not be good *policy*, but it is not what I was taught to regard as constitutional law.

MANY of the Justices, including some of the greatest, have denounced the Court's tendency to see itself as a super-legislature and urged self-restraint with great eloquence and, no doubt, sincerity. But those very Justices have themselves yielded to the temptation when their own convictions were strong enough. The renunciation of power, when it is there for the taking, is usually beyond the strength of frail political humanity. (Justice Blackmun wrote the opinions of the Court in the abortion cases, and two of Mr. Nixon's other appointees, also professed believers in strict construction and judicial self-denial, concurred.) Congress could drastically curtail the jurisdiction of the Court—if the Court did not hold the curtailment unconstitutional. But, as Justice Fleming recognizes, such radical surgery would be worse than the cancer. His own suggestion is a constitutional amendment limiting the tenure of Justices of the Supreme Court to sixteen years. There is much to be said for it. It would have cost us eighteen years of John Marshall and fourteen years of Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.; on the other hand, it would have spared us at least nineteen years of William O. Douglas. There may well be better solutions. It may be that the present situation is more easily to be borne than any possible remedy. At any rate, *The Price of Perfect Justice* is an intelligent, stimulating description and analysis of a serious political problem.

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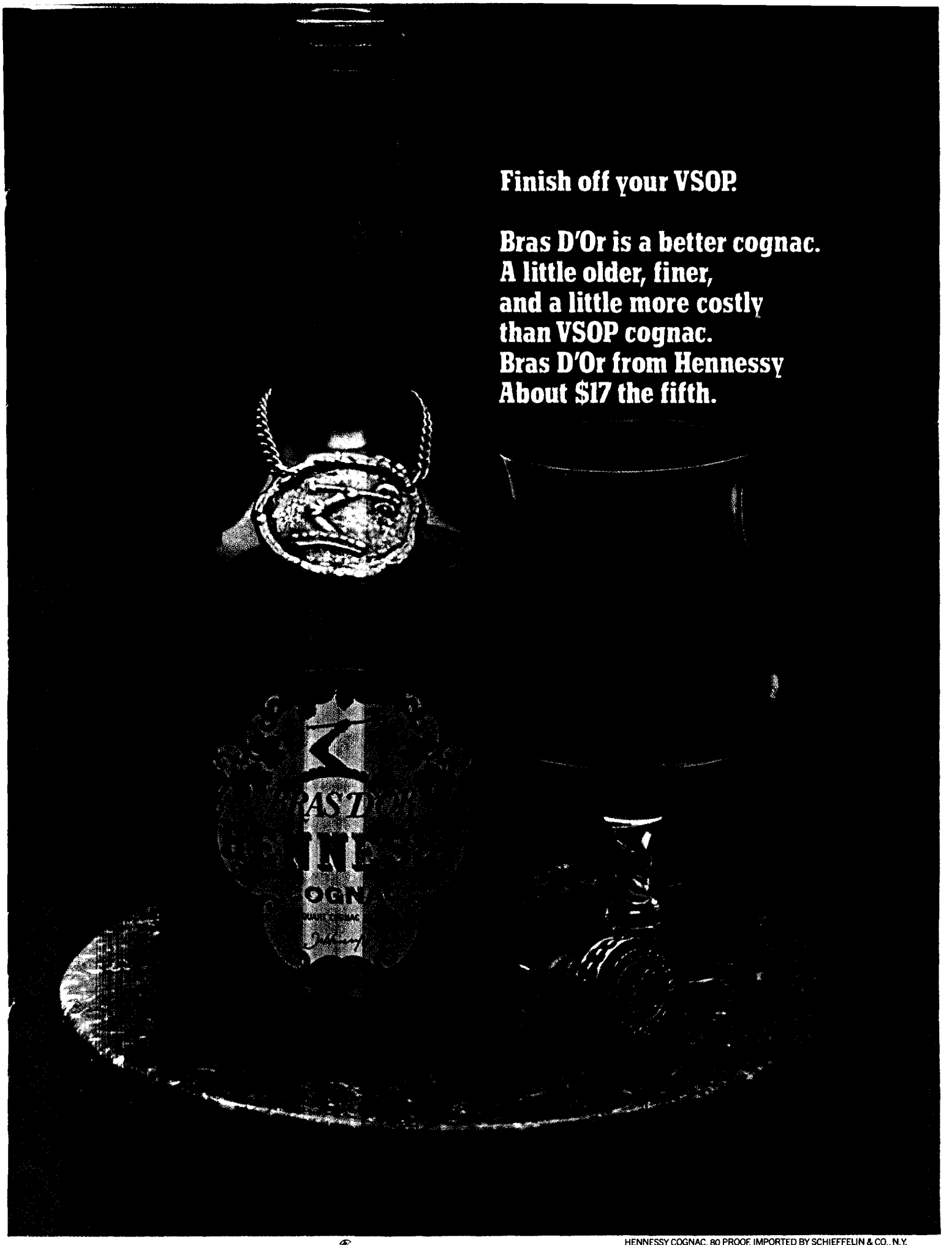
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